# LETTERS TO TEACHERS

HARTLEY B. ALEXANDER

# LETTERS TO TEACHERS

AND OTHER PAPERS OF THE HOUR

By

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*To my sister*

*CHARLOTTE*

## PREFACE

IT is, doubtless, needless to say that the papers here collected are frankly journalistic, frankly propaganda. They were written during war-time, and while directed to the internal condition rather than the external affairs of our nation, they are influenced and inspired by the omnipresent fact of the international catastrophe. The problem with which they deal is the problem of reconstruction where it is most fundamental, and that is in the education of the American citizen; for the economic and social difficulties which today we face can find no lasting solution except it be in a state of mind, a national state of mind, which shall unite our citizenship in a unified purpose; and this it is the business of education to define and achieve. The issue is sufficiently important to demand journalism, to justify propaganda.

Most of the papers here reprinted were originally addressed to the people of Nebraska, but they deal with problems which are local and national in the same sense, so that their particular context ought not to prevent their general consideration. The title series was first published in the *Nebraska State Journal* (Lincoln), April-July, 1918, under the heading, "Letters to Nebraska Teachers." Other

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# I

# LETTERS TO TEACHERS

## LETTER I

### LIFE'S ADVENTURE

I WHO write this am Nebraska born. Most of my education, too, was given me by Nebraska, where I attended grade and high schools and finally the state university, in which I have now passed ten years of my mature life as a teacher. The public schools of Nebraska, grade and high and collegiate, form a single system, having for their purpose the education of the up-growing citizens of the state. It is of these schools and of this education that I propose to write, addressing the public school teachers of the state, the great majority of whom are, like myself, native born and educated in Nebraska; and I trust that what I shall have to say will be of interest, also, to teachers whose work falls in other parts of the nation, where the problems of life, and of education as a part of life, do not, it appears to me, radically differ from those which I perceive in my own environment. I shall hope also to reach citizens who are not teachers by profession; for I am sure that all good citizens realize that the object of public education is to so train its youth that they will live honorably and well, and make the commonwealth pleasanter and more habitable for man-

kind; and I am sure that so great a concern as this cannot fail of their attention. In the long run, citizen and teacher and youth have one common aim—to make and keep human life wholesome and sane and in the highest sense happy.

I should like to speak first of all of those things in Nebraska that I cherish. I have reached that age when a man begins to realize that memories are as rich in life's portion as are hopes, and that what is dear out of the past must color and warm all that is to be dear in the future. Life is, to be sure, a kind of adventure, and our best prayer for each is that his life may prove to be a beautiful adventure; yet we should not forget that this adventure of living has an end, even as it had a beginning, and that the value of a life is to be found in what it is as a whole, not merely in the expectations and desires which happen to engross its present hours. As men grow into maturity they begin to realize that the true gold which they have amassed is their treasured memories; and realizing this they become the more solicitous for their children, knowing that the only fortune which no change can take from their heirs will be the memories that live on into the after years.

The main part of the years of my boyhood were spent in a country village of southeastern Nebraska—just such a village as scores of others which today dot the map of the state. My earliest recollection of it is of a place bare and windswept, open alike

to the unrelenting suns of summer and the unremitting gales of winter; and there seemed (so my memory reports) something quite audacious in the group of crude frame buildings, standing unrelieved and nude in the midst of miles of almost treeless prairie. Today, this village is nearly hidden in summertime by the luxuriant green of its leafage, and the country round about is one continuous chequer of hedgerow and field and grove; nor can winter at its whitest take away the impression of snug comfort that has changed the whole face of nature.

It was with this change from a raw pioneer town to the snug trading hamlet of a well-seated farming community that I grew up; and the Nebraska I know best of all is, I suspect, the Nebraska of the transformation from virgin prairies into cultivated farms—a Nebraska of some hardships, but of a great adventure done once for all; for the prairies which I knew as a boy were just such as they had been, for century upon century, since the great ice had melted away to the north, leaving on them the strewn gravel in which I used to find onyx and agate; and the farms as they are now are surely much what will be through as many centuries more, perhaps, until a new age of ice comes again to drive away their summers. The transformation was surely a very wonderful period, and I am glad that I have lived in that good time.

Of course I did not realize all this, as a boy—

what boy could? But I felt its stir, none the less. There was always a thrill in seeing the prairie broken, the horses even in double team tugging and sweating, and the long ribbons of sod turning in neat parallels. There was beauty, too, in the fires that swept through the dried grass of autumns, tanged with danger, and illuminating the hills at night for miles around. Then there were tree-plantings and house-raisings and auctions and busy market days—all occasions when folk gathered to the enterprise with a hearty vacation spirit, naturally attractive to boys; while, from another angle, there were old-timers with stories of freighting days and Indian fights. Nor was the "wild west" so far remote; every year cowboy traders came through with droves of half-broken mustang and broncho ponies, and not a few exhibitions of hardy horsemanship; while hardly a season passed without at least one encampment of Indians journeying on their endless tribal visits from reservation to reservation. But most affecting of all to the imagination were the prairie-schooners of the new settlers—streams of them, spring and autumn, drifting westward, westward, into their land of promise.

With other boys I used to explore the country; wandering up and down the banks of the wooded Nemaha; playing at Indian with bows of ash, arrows of reed, and spears of dried sunflower stalks; searching for occasional arrowheads and flints in the gravel beds; or gathering treasures from the

limestone quarries, abundant with fossil relics of the time when as yet this land was not and where Nebraska is was the teeming life of old Devonian seas. With other boys, too, I went to the village schools—old-fashioned, I suspect the teachers of our day would call them, or perhaps old fogy; certainly, as I recall, grammar and arithmetic were regarded by the pupils as the real tests of their mettle, while spelling-down appealed to our sporting instincts. I learned a trade, too, as did many of the others, and planned and hoped with them for the great day when—like the movers in the prairie schooners—I should set out to discover the wide world beyond the prairie horizon and make unclaimed lands my own.

Most of the boys who were my companions grew up to fulfill their hope of adventuring out into untried frontiers or strange lands, and today they are scattered in many a far place. I, also, departed, and for a decade dwelt in distant cities; but unlike many, I returned again to my native soil, and with I believe a new veneration for what is beautiful in Nebraska. For I have discovered that those beauties which most endure in human experience are not to be found in the novel and spectacular moments of the traveler, but in familiar and intimate things, and especially in those impressions which come to childhood and youth, when the mind is eager with curiosity and fresh with hope. To me the prairies of Nebraska are wonderfully beautiful, with their

broad curves and modulating distances. I love, too, the animation of the cornfields, stirred by cruising winds; the sudden thunderstorm with its avalanche of lightning and the impetuous rain sweeping up after the great billow of cloud is the very raiment of majesty; and I think I have never seen such stars as ours, over the whole dome of heaven, of a winter's night. Nor can I ever forget that once-seen sunset sky, gold and burnished copper from circumference to circumference, which will be for me forever the image of the sublimities of the judgment day.

My eight-year-old, like his father, was born in Nebraska, and in the same city. It gives me a certain satisfaction to recognize this continuity of generations, and to hope that it may go on in the future. I hear his shout of joy at play; I watch him trudge off to school; and I think of him—as I suppose other parents think of their children—as gathering day by day that store of vivid impressions which are one day to come home to him as a precious treasure. It is pleasant to know that a part of the kinship with his father which he will some time realize will be that deepest of all comradeships which rests upon a common understanding of the same earth and sky with all the companioning changes of nature. It is out of such common understanding that love of home and love of country grow to mean so much to men.

Of course I recognize that the Nebraska he will

know cannot be quite the Nebraska that I have known. For instance, where I as a boy, was interested in ponies and mover's wagons, he is interested in automobiles and railroad trains; and I have discovered from his chance comments that the schoolroom for him has a color and tone different from those which cling to mine out of the old days. But more than all, I am sure that he will never know the exuberance and adventurous hopefulness which belonged to the pioneer days, when everything was to be done, and nothing was complete, and the whole face of nature was to be changed to suit men's new needs. That was a great enterprise which our fathers took in hand; and they performed it well, and once for all; so that what Nebraska now is many generations will continue to see it. Nor could so great a deed have been achieved without inspiration in the souls of them that did it, and a kind of glory enveloping their lives.

What will take its place—have you never asked the question—what will take the place of the great adventure of the pioneers, to put in the souls of their children the old fire and the old enthusiasm that seem so precious to us as we look back? It was good, we can see, for them to be building a pleasant habitation for their heirs in the land; they lived creative lives, stalwart and honorable, but is it so good for their children's children? Are these simply to inhabit the pleasant house, making no addition? Could such a life be a good life, inheriting all, creat-

ing nothing? Or are there still such tasks to perform, here in Nebraska, as shall test the mettle of the best of them, and give them all that buoyancy of soul which comes but when life is touched with the noble generosity of fine deeds to do? To the minds of all citizens such questions must come at times; but most of all they will occur and recur to teachers and parents, for it is teachers and parents who most fully realize that the one true heritage which a passing generation can leave to its youth is a noble task.

I have no qualms as to this with respect to my boy. My life has been cast in a great generation; but his, if he be spared, will be lived in a greater. Its achievement will not, I believe, be of the character of those which have made my generation great; marvels of physical achievement, such as the mastery of earth and sea and air by machines, the uniting of the seas by great canals, the discovery of Earth's two poles, and here the transformation of the great North American wilderness into civilized states, uniting in amity men of all nations. But the next generation will have set for it tasks more stupendous than these, pertaining not to mechanical and physical but to human and spiritual problems. The most terrible of all wars began in 1914 and at this writing is not yet ended. This war has shaken human civilization to its foundations; it has destroyed cities and devastated nations; but of more lasting significance are the deeper destructions of men's political and economic institutions and the

more harrowing devastations of men's souls. The secret of sane living must be rediscovered by the next generation, the world must be reorganized for a better and purer and nobler race of men; nor is there a phase of social or intellectual life that will not have to be renewed and reillumined by the men and women of the future.

I watch my son trudge off to school, here in Nebraska, and I am glad in the hope that he may play a man's part in that great task. I have a feeling, no doubt partly a bias for my native soil, that the sons and daughters of this great west, so lately virgin sod and still shining with the generous glamour of the spirit of the pioneers, should be well qualified for a great part in the great task. I realize, of course, that this qualification cannot be merely one of natural advantages or of inherited spirit; that in addition there must be the soundest and most genuine education which state and parents can afford, or by thought and care find out. I am convinced, too, that our schools and the whole commonwealth whose ideals they reflect have not yet risen to the measure of this opportunity or of the hour and of the duty which is theirs. Further, I believe that the surest means of reaching not merely the schools, but even more the public of the commonwealth, who must be reached if a true conception of education is to be attained, is through the teachers in these schools—the teachers of Nebraska, of all America. Therefore I am addressing to them these

letters in the hope that what I have to say may seem worth consideration and inspire discussion and lead —in some better form than I can suggest—to action. For it is to action that we are called; even as our fathers were called to the great task of redeeming a wilderness, even as our children must be called anew to regenerate the nations, so we, in our day, are summoned to prepare the way for them, training their bodies and opening their minds to vision, —our part in the eternal deed of human progress, O Adventurers!

## LETTER II

### THE SCHOOL AND THE COMMONWEALTH

THE states of the American union have each their own sovereignty. No doubt the twentieth century American, with his strong sense of the central nation, has grown away from the intense state patriotism of the earlier years of the republic. To a considerable degree he has even lost his feeling for the federal nature of our constitution. Particularly in the newer commonwealths, with their migrant populations and uncertainty of tradition, it is easy for the citizen to focus his attention upon the national aspects of his citizenship—upon the flag and the imperial grandeur of our domain and upon the high statecraft of Congress and the White House—rather than to permit it to become absorbed in the less showy manifestations of his local sovereignty. And yet each commonwealth of the United States is a sovereign, and exercises sovereign rights, and in a sovereign manner determines the destinies of its citizens. Nor is there another single feature in which this sovereignty is exerted with so much force and significance for human life as in the schools—those free public schools which are the mainstay of all free human society. Assuredly, in

the support of such an institution the citizen of any commonwealth may feel that he is furthering the ends of the truest statecraft and manifesting the most enduring patriotism.

In democracies the sovereign is the people. But a people can be sovereign only when it understands the nature and duties of sovereignty. It is the first principle of public education that it shall secure this understanding; and the free schools of the commonwealth are, therefore, the final fortification of its democratic rights. The two great institutions upon which Americanism rests are the ballot and the public schools, and the latter are the true preparation for the former. When, therefore, in the ordering of American institutions, the organization and conduct of the schools are left in the hands of the several states, this is the truest recognition not only of their proper sovereignties, but also of the fact that the sovereign power of the nation as a whole is the creation and summation of these state sovereignties. It is also a pledge of confidence of the states in one another that each may be relied upon to broaden and preserve the conceptions of liberty and justice and human right which form the bond and cement of our national unity—and the proud soul of our Americanism.

By far the largest single item in Nebraska's annual budget (and doubtless this is true of most of our commonwealths) is the educational expenditure. This is as it should be, but it should be so primarily

for the reason that the schools of Nebraska are the safeguards of her democratic institutions, and hence of the free life of the whole community. The schools exist for the betterment of the life of the state as a whole, and therefore of the United States as a whole—this is the first principle upon which, in a truly American education, all other educational principles must rest. The tax which the school system imposes upon the community is justified by the returns which the schools make in the preservation of the community and in its betterment, and by nothing else. In brief, the first aim of public education is to train qualified citizens.

This principle must not be applied in a narrowly political sense, as teachers are sometimes inclined to apply it. It does not mean an intensive concentration upon, say, American history and civics, important as these are. Rather, it means the cultivation of a true liberalism as the core of all our schooling—grade, high school, and college—and the dissemination of this liberalism among the greatest possible number of our youth. Liberalism is the one essential qualification for the citizen of a democracy; and what we mean by democratic equality is the opportunity—nay, the duty—of every citizen to share in this essential. Free education must first of all be liberal education; that is the starting-point of our philosophy.

In later letters (indeed, it shall be my central theme) I shall endeavor to explain in detail what I

regard as the proper schooling of a democratic liberal. Here I shall but seek to give a broad conception of what qualities in the man a liberal education must cultivate. And these, I should say, are a love and understanding of truth and virtue and beauty. Love of truth means honesty with one's self as well as frankness with one's fellow—"to thine own self be true . . . thou canst not then be false to any man"—and it means this for the sake, most of all, of the great gain that comes from free human intercourse. The value of free speech and of the free press about which we say so much is directly dependent upon the honesty and truth-loving spirit of society; without this spirt, there is no freedom. Love of virtue—the second quality named—means the power of self-control. The Greeks meant this when they made the first rules of conduct "Know thyself" and "Temperance in all things"; for knowledge of self is the first step in self-control, just as temperance, self-restraint, is its achievement. Human conduct is ordered by two great forces, our instincts and our virtues; and if you will reflect upon the nature of the virtues (courage which overcomes fear, temperance which conquers appetite, industry which outfaces sloth) you will perceive, I am sure, that the virtues are in the nature of curbs and reins upon the instincts; the instincts are given us by nature, it is the virtues that can be trained. Nor is self-control less essentiol to freedom and to a society of equals than is

love of truth; for it is the practice of a free society to be able to give as well as to take—to abide by the rule of the majority, for example, and take one's turn for the expression of opinion or the execution of a policy rather than to rush into revolution or tyranny. The third factor in a liberal education is love of beauty. This is not less essential to an enduring society than is either of the others; for love of beauty means an ability to idealize and to imagine better things, and hence to be inventive and creative, and therefore interested in the work which men find to do. Without this idealizing power men sink naturally back into an animal indifference to all save material comforts; they become swinish, and willing to fatten at any trough; and for such a state of mind all democracy is illusion. Love of beauty is, in truth, the final and completed salvation of the state.

Now there is one characteristic which these traits have in common, and it is the one characteristic which makes them truly liberal. Love of truth and love of virtue and love of beauty are all unselfish and impersonal. Not one of them is based upon self-seeking and self-gratification in any narrow mode. Indeed, they move in quite the opposite direction. Love of truth, for example, is closely allied to humility; it implies a willingness to be taught, and absence of that conceit which is the customary mark of ignorance. Love of virtue comes only from a self-understanding, and that means

from a full appreciation of what temptation signifies in human life, and of human weaknesses, and especially of one's own weaknesses. Love of beauty is most of all a native generosity of soul, implying sympathy and an ability to enter into other lives than one's own, understandingly and without envy. Thus each of the three means a kind of liberation from what is selfish and animal in one's nature and a willingness to find the good of life in what is universal and humane. It is in such liberations that true liberalism is to be found, and especially the liberalism that makes possible democratic states; for it is in democracies, where men must get along together by mutual agreement and free self-surrenders, that willingness to learn and understanding of men's weaknesses and a generous sympathy are most indispensable.

There is a very important inference to be drawn from the nature of liberal education so defined—an inference thrice important in our own day when so much stress is laid upon what is called vocational training (and really is technical and mechanical training). For clearly, if the end of free schools is primarily the liberal education of citizens who can, through understanding and love of it, preserve the state, it cannot be the first purpose of these schools to give the scholar training in particular crafts for the sake of his individual career. The vocation is something that pertains to the private rather than the public life of the man; it represents what he

does for himself or what his parents or family do for him rather than what the state should be called upon to do. There is, to be sure, a good coming to the state from the fact that it possesses citizens highly trained in special crafts; modern society is complex and cannot continue without specialists and technicians. But, on the other hand, a community composed of men who are specialists and technicians without first being liberally trained citizens cannot continue as a democracy; inevitably it will develop into a society of classes, castes, unions, federations, mutually hostile and exclusive. Vocational education, by itself, is purely aristocratic. The first duty of a democracy is to remain a democracy; and the only schooling it can tolerate, therefore, is one which first of all secures to all its citizens such a heart and constitution of liberalism as shall insure the maintenance of democratic freedom amid all the complexities of technical human pursuits. This is a matter of huge importance, which no teacher (even of the most special subject) can ever afford to forget. Undoubtedly there is room in our schools for technical and vocational training; but it is equally undoubted that no true patriot can ever allow such training to infringe in the slightest upon the needs of a broad and fundamental liberalism.

In the interests of that liberalism the school-child, from his primary years, should have it impressed upon his mind that his public schooling, while a

free gift from the state, is not given without expectation of return. He should have it impressed upon his mind that his privileges imply responsibilties, and that the first and last of his duties is to bring to the service of the state and the community such an understanding of human life as only an impersonal outlook can give. It is altogether a mistake to permit young children even to think too seriously of their own careers in the world. They should rather be concerned with mastering its history and problems, and in acquiring such an understanding of human nature as shall make them judges of the general good. Without such an attitude of mind the liberties of society cannot be safeguarded, while it is hardly conceivable that all the time and effort devoted to its cultivation will react otherwise upon our technical and industrial life than for greater intelligence of direction and fruitfulness of achievement.

There is, of course (and this is in the nature of a caution), possible misdirection of devotion to others. Youth is naturally eager and generous and quick with desire to serve. "Social service," indeed, has become a perilous term nowadays, our danger being that we shall get too many servants and too little that is worthy of service. It is essential, therefore, that the lesson of modesty be learned well, and this can best be achieved by the truest liberalism. Say to the young, "If you would best serve the state and best serve mankind, this will be most fully accom-

plished and to the height of your abilities by a cultivated interest in the best and solidest in human thought and the noblest in human nature; such an interest you can obtain by study, without thought of self, which in making you an intelligent human being will thereby make of you a true guardian of the social good." Service of mankind is, after all, not best realized in alms to individuals, apart from their deserts, but in devotion to the best that human nature is capable of; and this can be known only through study of what men have thought and done.

Liberal education is not a cheap thing, either for the generation which gives it or for the generation which receives it. The one must make sacrifices of material comforts for the sake of the upbringing of its young; and it should endeavor, for the sake of that progress, which means social health, to pass to its youth something more in the way of opportunity than it had received from its own fathers. The other must give hard and unselfish effort to the work which sound schooling always implies; for neither understanding of truth nor of virtue nor of beauty comes without some toil. Fortunately, deep in human nature is a generous devotion of parents to the good of their children and a generous devotion of youth to all that appeals to what is noblest in man's soul. It but remains for the teachers, first, to understand the spirit of liberalism, and second, to be able so to make its needs manifest, to parents and

the most important, it is the least costly element in our education. A teacher with the gift of understanding and a few good books are all the equipment that is necessary,—for there is eternal truth in the old definition of a college: a log with a student at one end and Mark Hopkins at the other. No community is too poor to afford liberal training; and few communities there are that cannot afford much in addition. Indeed, a community which is itself liberally trained will insist upon its schools giving much in addition.

It will insist, for one thing, that the local schools shall be representative and distinctive of the local community. In its broad fundamentals, state education must be uniform in content; but certainly there should never be such a systematization of it, from any center, as should preclude each community from finding the highest expression of its own needs and genius in its schools, or should hamper a teacher in developing new modes of securing the essential content. Local government is our first training for state government, and in order to be sound training it must be free. Freedom is equally essential in the local schools; they should never refuse guidance from above, but they should be slow indeed to permit dictation. Liberty and responsibility—these are only secured in their exercise.

In order to represent a community a school must respond to the community's interests and guide its

interests. Both of these are important—the response and the guidance.

The response, of course, will be to needs felt in the consciousness of the local public. Naturally—since man's life is, after all, primarily still that of the Adam who digged and delved,—the material and practical needs of the community will be oftenest emphatic in the minds of its elders. Parents will perforce be thinking of the careers of their children, even when the children are still innocent of ambition; and from this thought will come a legitimate concern for the vocational side of schooling. Undoubtedly it should receive a wise response from the schools. In a community where manufacturing is a great interest, and in the inevitable course of events many of the youth are bound in time to replace their parents in the parents' occupations, it is reasonable that the schools should give the young an understanding of the principles and aims of craftsmanship (which ought by no means to imply a specific apprenticeship to one narrow trade—surely beyond the rights of any public school). Similarly, in an agricultural community, a knowledge of nature and the love of it would be the best of introductions to life for those who were to become nature's especial intimates. There is, besides, in every community a scattering of boys and girls gifted with a genius unrelated to the accident of their birthplace, and no school can afford to be without opportunities for the child who brings to

the world an aptitude for art or science or invention, or for the one who is born with that zeal for mankind whose expression is the lives of saints and apostles. The local school should have for a prime object its own power of adaptation and change, not only to meet possible changes in the local industry (say, from cattle to corn, or agriculture to oil) but even more to suit itself to the genius by whose birth the community might be blessed. Schools ought not to represent systems through which human life is forced by mechanical pressure; they should rather be gardens in which the natural souls of men are fosteringly nurtured. In brief, the child, not the institution, is the true object of education.

But the child is not the only object of education, nor is the school capable of responding merely to the industrial needs of the community. Men's education never really ceases while they continue to live and act; and their schooldays ought never to come to an end. I mean this quite literally. It is my entire belief that the school of the future will stand not merely for the years five to twenty, but one to three score and ten. I said that in its community the school should not merely respond to local interests, it should also guide them; it should discover for them and aid them to answer what they so often unconsciously and far more intensely desire. Here is where the teacher should be a true leader of society, a psychologist of no meager gifts and a citizen "primus inter pares."

The Adam who digged and delved is, after all, but the "first Adam," suffering the penalty of his natural weakness. But there is, in us all, a "last Adam," who, as St. Paul says, is "a quickening spirit." Not always is the last Adam a conscious soul; often, alas, life is such as to becloud and conceal his faculties. It is for the teachers—who are spiritual leaders if they are anything—to awaken and reveal this last Adam, and find for him, no matter what his years as to the flesh, in the schools, the opportunity of understanding and expression. Men and women and little children, along with schoolboys and schoolgirls, all should look to the public school as the fostering mother—*alma mater*—of their fuller life.

The thing is not difficult to imagine, and, I believe, would be not very difficult of realization. It could begin unpretentiously; and once started—granted understanding leadership,—the end would be achieved almost without resistance. Once get firmly centered in the mind of the community that the public school is not merely the temporary warden of youth, but is a part of the life of the community and of every individual in the community throughout his life, and the schools and the teaching profession alike will be transformed; while as for the state, it will be more firmly founded than ever in the truest of democracies.

Let me indicate the process I have in mind, mentioning first of all those needs which the schools can

serve. These are the needs of those very faculties which it is the purpose of liberalism to cultivate; the need of the intellect, which is instruction in truth; the need of the imagination, which is images of beauty; the need of the moral nature, which is social understanding and sympathy, and, in a more intimate form, the desire for participation in all that is good and noble, for which the school should stand along with the church. Such are the needs of the "last Adam" when at length he makes his self-discovery,—needs which do not pertain to him as a private body, but as a public spirit and a sharer in humanity.

Ministration to such needs ought to begin with books, which are the records and perpetuators of the liberal gains of the human spirit. The circulatory system is not more essential to the health of the body, pumping red blood constantly to every wasting organ, than is the library to liberal culture. Every school should not only have a library, it should be a library; and every schoolmaster should be the librarian of his community, guiding the selection and advising in the use of books. Children, of course, should be habituated to the use of books from their first reading years, and they should have the satisfaction of their material and accessible presence. But the community, also, should look to the schoolhouse as the center of its reading interest, —open of afternoons and evenings to all comers, to the profit of all and the pride of all. Libraries are

anchors of civilization and no community should be satisfied without firm anchorage.

Again, every school should be provided with an entertainment hall—simple in form, but dignified and beautiful, as simple things may be,—and, for outdoor weather, with a festal greensward. The love of beauty is native to all men, but taste needs cultivation, and cultivation means, most of all, opportunity to see the beautiful. Here again, the teacher should be the leader, devising constantly new forms of entertainment—music and dancing, exhibitions and lectures, pageantry and drama,—which the community should not only be offered for its appreciation, but in which it could find opportunity of expression (the straightest path to appreciation). Why, for example, should not every schoolhouse. city and country, be the possessor of its own cinema, giving what is good and lasting from this wonderful invention and thereby eradicating the cheap and sensational and often damnable "movie"? Even more, the beauty of rhythmic motion and dramatic imitation, which children naturally delight to give expression to and elders delight to contemplate, should draw youth and age together in a bond of lasting sympathy,—so that the whole community would turn to the school as surely as the flower turns to sunlight for the illumination of life. Certainly, were I the maker of the school calendar, it would be bright with red-letter days.

Finally there is the steadier and not less important

response which the school could give to the social instincts of the community. Why should the schoolhouse not become the clubhouse of its neighborhood? Young folks and elders alike have numberless occasions for meeting in social groups, formally and informally. There should not be a sharp line of distinction between the affairs of youth and those of age; at least, in many matters the interests of life should be without this division. Further, youth will gain in maturity and judgment, as age in freshness and inspiration, from a close association, especially in public matters; and the schoolhouse is the proper place for bringing about this union. The old-time lyceum performed such a function, and performed it to the profit of a good Americanism. It will never return in the old form, but it may well be brought back, and should be brought back, in the newer form of the community clubhouse, which should surely be the schoolhouse. In it, or in connection with it, should be provided reading rooms and rest rooms, and club rooms, and debating rooms (all of which are functions that can be adapted to any set of four walls); and there should be provided also outdoor grounds for sports and greens for picnics, for the physical school should be not merely bricks and glass, but park and garden as well. All ages and sexes and conditions of life should find their way to the schoolyard, not once, but many times a year; and so, indeed, they would, once the idea were made vivid and the habit started,

for the realization of all this is only a matter of a leader with the power to give vivid expression to the idea and the skill to give intelligent direction to the forming habit.

Could a school occupying the place in the life of the community which I have suggested be anything less than a fortress of democratic liberty and true popular sovereignty? It would cultivate intelligent thought through books and discourse; it would awaken and preserve the patriotism of its own community's and of the nation's ideals through a noble and native art; it would bring men and women and children together in a spirit of sympathy, playful or serious, without self-seeking, without private ambition. Finally, the institution itself, the school of the community, would stand physically and spiritually as the symbol of the higher life and nobler ideals of that community. Can it be doubted that in the presence of such a symbol the citizens would more clearly think through the issues of human life, individual and public, and would desire more ardently the best? And so I would say to my fellow teachers of Nebraska: Let us work with this ideal until Nebraska's schools shall be like shining standards, like emblazoned banners, proclaiming what men live and labor for under the blue Nebraska skies!

## LETTER IV

### THE SCHOOLYARD

FOR the nonce I should like to be visionary and indulge an Utopian fancy—remembering (as I would have my readers remember) that all the monuments which mankind has erected were once but Utopian visions, and that it is out of such visions that the selective years make their choices of the ideals which men deem worth working for. At least one fruit of the cultivation of the imagination is to give men those images of ideal things from which the possible are chosen and the actual created.

Ever since, as a boy, I went to school at the old frame house, foursquare with the four winds, and shivered in a corner far from the stove, I have formed and reformed my speculative vision of the ideal school—which, of course, has grown in form and finish with the cumulative terms. In the first place, I would have the school buildings, if not monumental, at all events beautiful in form and proportion and attractive in site; for I am a firm believer in the power of noble architecture to inspire noble thinking. Architecture is, after all, the most humane of all arts; for it is concerned not in imitating the forms of nature, but in satisfying

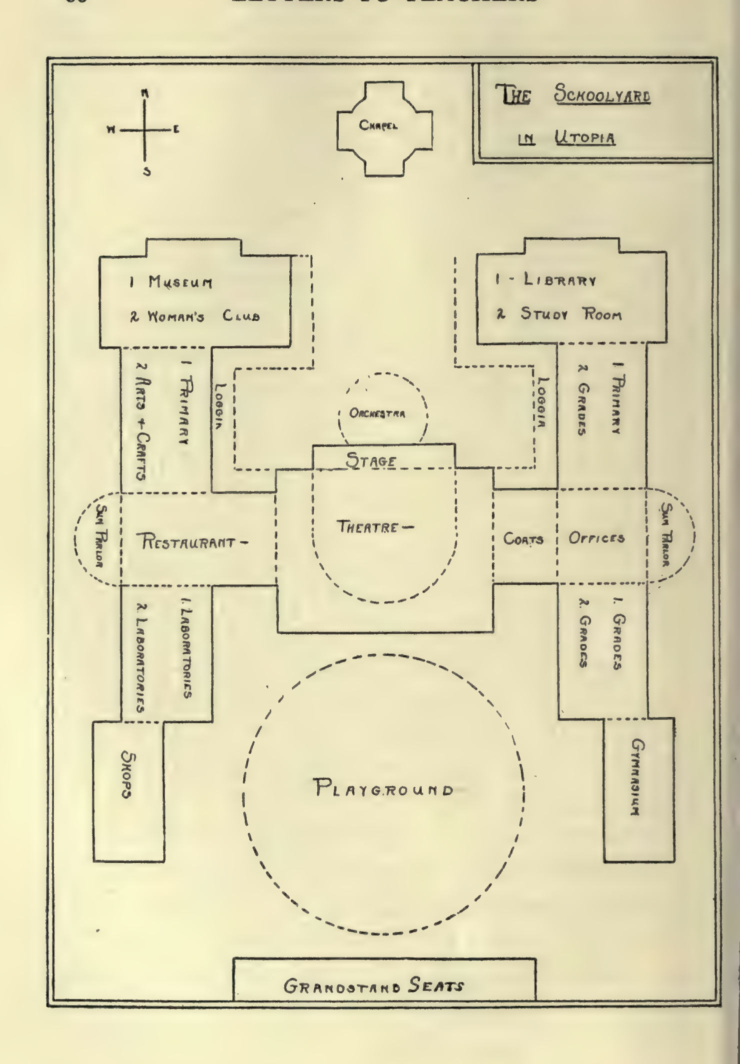
directly human needs, and of all the works of man it is capable of giving the most conscious impression of the strength and dignity of his intelligence. Architectural quality should be a prime requisite of every public building and most of all of educational buildings, where the whole spirit of the state is being formed.

But architecture must be appropriately seated, and my second demand (not less imperative than the first) is that every school yard should be a garden. I do not mean a vegetable garden (though in cities space for even that is worth while), but I do mean a garden of trees and shrubs and flowers, and above all a garden for the bright graces of childhood and youth—an embowered playground. The seat of the most famous of all universities, the Academy of Plato, was a grove; and nowhere should a fane of education be erected in less devoted surroundings. Every school yard should be famed for its elms and oaks, its lilacs and roses; for the beauty of architecture is never perfect save it be set in the friendly context of the beauty of nature—nor, I think, is it far-fetched to suppose that the subtle lesson of the interdependence of man and nature may be first impressed by this outward symbol. At any rate, beautiful groves have always seemed to men sacred.

There is, in cities, another reason for park-like school yards. The streeets of modern towns are becoming yearly more perilous, while the houses

themselves are more and more packed and gregarious—the lot spaces shrinking, the flat and apartment houses increasing in number, and the children in consequence being crowded more and more to the literal walls. It seems amazing to me, in view of all the sentiment we have for golden childhood and in view of the undoubted love of parents for their children, that such meager intelligence is used in providing space for the life of childhood—space, space, space! with sunlight and turf and room for running. Sooner or later (and, oh, it should be sooner) our communities will awaken to a consciousness of their own blind cruelty, and they will restore to the children the right to out-of-doors which God gave them. And surely the schoolmasters and school directors should be the leaders in such a movement. For which reason, I think, no city or village school should be set in a space of less than two ordinary town blocks; while even the country school can afford to choose a fair field for its site. This at least, out of my Utopia, I shall prophesy—that the school of the future will be seated in a garden.

But let us enter my imaginary school garden—two hundred yards long by a hundred wide, or thereabouts, with the buildings forming a solid H, following the lines of the rectangle, and enclosing two courts for sports and out-door school (for I see no good reason why in fine weather school should be an indoor affair). A low wall, with vines


The Schoolyard
in Utopia
N
W
E
S
Chapel
1 Museum
2 Woman's Club
1 - Library
2 Study Room
1 Primary
2 Arts + Crafts
Loggia
Orchestra
Stage
Loggia
2 Grades
1 Primary
Sun Parlor
Restaurant -
Theatre -
Coats
Offices
Sun Parlor
1. Laboratories
2. Laboratories
2. Grades
1. Grades
Shops
Playground
Gymnasium
Grandstand Seats

running over it and flowers and shrubs lining it, surrounds the school precincts, while at each corner of the grounds there are clumps of trees, with play or picnic spaces on the sward beneath. We will enter where the path comes in beside one of these clumps—say, at the northwest, for normally the axis of the plan should be north and south.

As we turn into the path, we perceive to our left, at the north center of the grounds and a bit secluded by greenery, a small chapel built on the old Byzantine plan of superposed cross and circle. We may return to this bye and bye; for the present, we are drawn in the opposite direction. There we see—dignified with those columned porticoes which in themselves are the architectural image of learning and stateliness—the facades of the two buildings which form the extremities of the upper arms of our H. That which we are passing, to the right, is the museum of the civic and school district. It contains the gifts of beautiful and curious objects which every community receives when it provides a place for them; it contains natural history collections; it contains exhibits of the artistic work of the school children, or others; and it is of course provided with spaces for special exhibitions of interest to the community. There are rest rooms and store rooms below the main floor, and on the floor above are women's rooms—small committee or conference rooms and a large community club room for women, open every day. The branch

of the H leading back from this to the transverse central building, contains on the first floor primary grade rooms (as does the corresponding branch across the court), while the second floor is devoted to studios and rooms for girls' instruction in things domestic (let us not call it by the terrifying name of "domestic science!"). Naturally, quarters for cooking and dining are adjacent to this section, and they are to be found in the western end of the central transverse.

But we are moving too rapidly from the entrance. The building corresponding to the museum, at the north end of our H, is the community library, with men's club rooms in the basement, and on the second floor reading and study rooms, leading directly into the grade rooms of the adjacent branch, which should have free access to the use of books. Beyond, in the eastern wing of the central building, are locker and rest-rooms, teachers' quarters, and, toward the street (as also on the corresponding west extremity of the bar) a semi-circular sun-room to be used especially for little folk whose health needs double care. The south extensions of the arms of our H, beyond the transverse, on the east are devoted to school rooms for the grades, and beyond, widening away from the court to allow greater space for sports, to a gymnasium; while on the west, the technical and scientific laboratories lead on to shops for wood and metal working—which ought to be open from eight o'clock of morn-

ings until nine at night, with free privilege of work to all school boys. Indeed, the whole western section of the school, which is devoted to arts and crafts, should keep open for long hours, giving the widest opportunity for the independently ambitious maker (and all youths are ambitious makers) to exercise his craftsman's ingenuity.

Between the shops and the gymnasium extends the great playground, with ball-court, tennis, and what not, for the older children—the youths. And there are seats for spectators against the south wall—rather for the elders than the young; for youth should play and age applaud, where sports are the issue (not but what father should come to the bat when son wants a little quiet game at the old gentleman's expense—or there might be quoits under the trees for the fat and sedate).

But the central building of our group is yet to describe. It is the architectural key and crown, the two courts formed by the branches of the H constituting its approaches. Loftier than the adjacent wings, or any other unit of the whole, it is capped by a dome—in my school, by an observatory with telescope, for the observation of the stars is one of the most fascinating and ennobling of studies, the parent of science, the inspiration of philosophies, the true liberalizer of the imagination. Beneath this dome is the theatre, for school assemblies, for public meetings, for civic or community drama and music. Drama is and should be the natural art of

democracies. Further, it can be made and should be made an important and continuous feature of public instruction—continuous from school days on throughout life's course. There is no reason why the schools of a community should not furnish dramatic entertainments of many kinds—plays, operas, cinemas, pageants, vaudeville (if it be made what it can be). There is every reason why the schools should furnish such entertainments—as for the cultivation of taste and morals, for the advancement of intelligent citizenship (for so many reasons that I propose to write a letter on just this by and by). In my ideal school, certainly, this theater is never idle, but for school children and citizens alike it is perpetually presenting the best attainable, and perpetually bettering the attainable in creating the demand for its betterment.

The front of this central theater, facing the north court, is in the form of an outdoor stage—for in such a climate as Nebraska's there are many, many days when an outdoor performance is the most charming of all. This, too, for music (chorus, band, or orchestral) is the ideal place, with the gardened court before it for spectators and listeners. You will remember that the first story school-rooms opening on this court from the sides are for the primary grades; and these rooms open out in wide sunny arches, forming a loggia all around the court, with a balcony above from the second-story rooms —all like the two tiers of boxes in a theater, afford-

ing seating for the spectacle staged out-of-doors. The space beneath is a formal garden, with a large paved circle just before the stage (like the orchestra of a Greek theater), and lesser circles or hexagons, surrounded by seats, interspersed by urn-borne plants and flower beds. Here the smallest folk have their play, and here, on sunny days, their teachers bring them out for lessons while of evenings the whole court is lighted with garden lanterns, and the grown-ups listen to the music, or watch the pageant on the stage or the dancing in the paved orchestra. In fact, this area is the center of community recreation, and the question of the day always is, "What is going on at the school-theater tonight?"

We have now completed the circuit of the schoolyard, and are returned to the northern entrance. There before us, facing the court, but secluded in its setting of shrubs is the little Byzantine chapel which we passed when entering. We will suppose that the day is drawing to a close, and the hour for vespers is come (5 o'clock of winters, 7 o'clock in the summertime), and so we pass in at the open door and take our seats quietly. The light is the light of sundown toned and hued by the stained-glass windows—a many-colored dusk at once softening and delicately illuminating. The service is in the same quiet spirit; it is without introduction, without formality; there is an organist playing—one who loves and understands the instrument; that is

all. Those who attend may be a score, may be but two or three, or but one. It makes no difference; the organist plays the noble and beautiful music of the church, and the hearers enter and slip away quietly. Chapel services (never compulsory) are held of mornings; the vespers are daily, too. But all day long the doors of the little chapel are open; and whoever of the whole community there may be who wishes to withdraw from the world for a still and meditative hour, contemplating, perhaps, a reproduction of one of the world's masterpieces of religious art (nowadays within the reach of all), finds here, in the cruciform chapel, the privilege of quiet and self-communion. And not only the elders come, but often the youth. For youth is a period when many solitary battles of the spirit must be fought through; when friends and teachers and parents are all helpless, and the boy must find his courage, the girl her strength, from other than human aid.

Perhaps night will have fallen when we emerge from the grateful quiet, and as we turn away we glance once more at the buildings we have explored. The frosted lamps under the porticoes that lead into the library and museum give them a more imposing beauty; while lighted windows show that both buildings are in full use. In the courtyard picturesque garden lanterns give a romantic charm, and there is already a sound of evening gaiety, for the folk are gathering. We look up, and we see that

the stars are coming out, and we suspect that even now there is some eager star-gazer in the observatory, high over all. For all of us are star-gazers; and always there are Utopias; and the distance from earth to heaven is measured by a thought.

## LETTER V

### THE CURRICULUM

"CURRICULUM" is a word I detest. It means a race-course and it suggests to my mind the image of a grand free-for-all in which the children—some with blinders and some with interference guards—are the entries; the teachers, with snapping whips and reins taut, are the jockeys; the parents are the bettors on the side-lines; and the grades are the marks of the course, leading up to the finish, where the youngsters come under the line nose to nose at commencement. The whole thing is full of dash and "pep"—and empty of meaning.

I do not mean to say that the subjects studied in the schools are vain or that the methods of teaching are inept; that could be but the judgment of ignorance. But I do say that my own most vivid impression of our "courses" of study, in grades and university alike, is of organization and systematization and theorization that obscures and threatens to destroy the true meaning and value of public education. The machinery of instruction has become so intricate that more attention is drawn to its operation than to its product. This is wholly damaging

to the intelligences of both teacher and pupil. Indeed, we should reconstruct our image of our own task; the school should be not a factory, but a garden; the teacher not a machinist, but a cultivator. I am no farmer, but I have no doubt that the first rule of good agriculture is, Keep your eye on the crop.

The crop which the public schools are to produce is intelligent citizenship, and the seed which they must sow and nurture is the seed of liberal learning. Everything else, therefore, is secondary to the old trinity—reading, writing, and arithmetic—which is the beginning of liberalism. If the schools but teach these three they have given keys to all other knowledge. Mankind has devised two great modes of communicating ideas—language and number. Each of these is an instrument of the intelligence, nor can human intelligence move freely if either be undeveloped. In looking to the end of education, therefore, it is first of all essential to provide for the mastery of these first gifts of civilization—which are also its last preservers.

The study of number leads to various attainments. I suppose its most obvious end is the practical. It is not merely to the small transactions of daily life that number is the key—to the use of clocks, time-tables, class periods, business appointments, meal hours, to money, transactions, accounts—but, in a broader scope, most of our material civilization is built upon mathematics; mechanics, manufactures, engineering, building, taxation, com-

merce, and again, the sciences, physical and biological alike, all are dominated by the need of an understanding of number. There is a kind of standardization of civilization which is represented by its mastery of mathematics, and is only in part symbolized by such universals as the metric system or Greenwich time, measures, respectively, of earth and heaven. The study of number leads directly to the understanding of geography and astronomy, and after these to the sciences, applied and theoretical, natural and social—and it is this fact, even more than its immediate utilities, that makes of arithmetic the most practical of studies.

But there are other than these practical consequences of the study of number. First, the most direct road to knowledge of right and wrong, true and false, is via arithmetic. In other fields of knowledge persuasion is needed to convince of the right or demonstrate the true. In mathematics the process of demonstration is a process of discovery, and the learner finds out for himself that the line between truth and error is hard and undeviating. This is a moral lesson—the moral lesson that is the foundation of all integrity of character. Second, and directly related to the preceding, arithmetic is the road to the discovery of our common-sense. Number is the most universal of all languages; its truths are undeniably clear to all men. Everywhere else there is room for disagreement; in mathematics we find the common ground of men's common

thinking. This is what we mean by common-sense; and it is a thing of no small significance that human beings may be brought to this degree of mutual understanding without effort, for it symbolizes the possibility of a final understanding in all our vital human affairs. Even before the great war men had begun to dream of a universal science, shared by the thinkers of all nations and leading, through scientific congresses and world conferences, to an eventual political understanding. The thing is not yet impossible, and all (in last analysis) just because there is no disputing about arithmetical truths. And thirdly, from the study of number comes the most conscious mental self-reliance. Of all human arts, the cultivation of mathematics is least dependent upon external conditions—it is equally possible in Greenland or the Congo; it is an affair of man's intellectual powers, and its consequences and constructions are so infinitely varied that we speak, and speak correctly, of a world of mathematics, meaning a world of the mind's own self-reliant discoveries. Each of these three, knowledge of truth and error, participation in humanity's common-sense, and the self-reliance of the intelligence, is a quality fundamental in the building up of human character. Is it a wonder, then, that Plato set over the portal of his academy, "Let none ignorant of number enter here"?

But along with number must come mastery of that other great means of human communication,

language. Reading is the key to the discovery of what others think; writing is the instrument for the expression of one's own thoughts. These two are the give and take of discourse, and it needs no exposition to show that they are the first needs of a democratic state. One can imagine dumb slaves at labor under a master or monks living in their solitary cells under a vow of silence; but in a free political society there must be a free expression—debate, oratory, the press, literature, all calling for a skillful power of speech and a willingness to hear and read. Besides this public value, there is all that a knowledge of books can mean for the enriching of the life of the individual (as a giver and as a receiver). Indeed, one has but to reflect how narrow is the letterless life, how defrauded of its possibilities, to be doubly convinced that a love of reading is the first gift of education.

The point of the study ought to be a love of reading and the cultivation of a literate taste, rather than a stressing of forms and apparatus—whether the language be native or foreign. Language exists primarily for use, and its use is the communication of ideas. I never could see much reason in the notion that the study of language is a "discipline," the good of which is to be derived from its difficulty. Of course there is grammar to be mastered and vocabulary to be memorized, and more than all, comprehension to be given of the fact that language is capable of style and is only effective when the

style is appropriate—that is, that there are different styles for different occasions, and in particular marked differences between the use of language in oral discourse and its use in literary forms. But all this is instrumental to the great end of learning to read and to love reading. For it is not only from reading that we get our fuller appreciation of beautiful speech, but it is reading which opens up to us the vast fields of history and philosophy and poetry, and all of that great inheritance of the thought of great minds and the records of great achievements which give civilization its meaning and national tradition its pride and spirit. I regard my own university courses primarily as introductions to certain fields of literature—groups of books; and my purpose in teaching is to persuade those who come to me to read further in these books than any limited course of study can provide for. This, I believe, should be the impulse of all study of languages (English or other)—to cultivate the love of books. And of course, books should be provided; a school without a library is groping in the night.

Writing is the complement of reading. It is the art of the expression of thought (in no small part, therefore, the art of thinking), and it should be taught as an art. Penmanship and spelling are to writing what grammar and vocabulary are to reading—instrumental and preparatory. The real purpose of the art is self-expression. Think for a moment what the first-class mail of the United States

means to the community, not merely in the way of economic and civic solidarity, but in the far more fundamental task of keeping alive and eager those warm instincts of human kinship—family and friendly and social—upon which our mutual sympathies rest; is it not, then, certain that the writer of even the most personal letter is serving the state and the cause of mankind? For the cultivation of the humane in human nature is assuredly the greatest of the causes to which human effort is devoted.

Doubtless some of my readers are wondering why all this talk about the obvious. Of course the three "r's" are taught, and will continue to be taught. But are they always taught with understanding of their purposes?—an understanding which the pupil should acquire no less than the teacher have. The question was put in a class in educational theory: "Ought a prospective farmer be given the same instruction in writing as a prospective clerk?" The question misses the whole point of the art of writing and the whole meaning of liberal education. When teachers of teachers entertain such problems as real it is surely not untimely still to discuss the meaning of the elements of learning.

Furthermore, I have that suspicion of the curriculum which I mentioned at the outset. It seems to me that the constant peril of systematized schools is of falling into the notion that the rote and routine are more important than the ends of study. So

many periods of this subject or that, so many pages of the textbook, so many required topics out of the way—all this gets into the teacher's mind and contagiously passes to the pupil; until the whole affair of schooling becomes a game (which the skillful student delights to "beat"), or a race the object of which is to cover the widest range of territory in the fewest possible years—which means seeing school-life and all life quite awry.

Rather (if we are to stand for liberalism) we should be looking always to the ends. Teacher and pupil alike should become aware that arithmetic and the other branches of mathematics are a magic key to the unlocking of nature's secrets—that the whole daylit world is full of numbers, and that the more one knows of numbers the better will be one's understanding of the world. They should perceive, too, that honesty and rectitude and integrity of mind are related to number, and that arithmetic is good common sense. The pupil should be introduced as soon as possible to the world of thought and imagination which reading opens—history, literature, speculation; and the love of these things should be the constant end of tuition. And through reading and writing alike the youngster should be brought to understand that language—even one's mother tongue—is an art of thinking and expression, and is therefore a possession well worth pains and striving. The art of teaching is surely an art of showing ends worth working for. The teacher cannot

give the benefits of study; he can only point them out, and by example and enthusiasm for the best inspire in the student that willingness to work, without which there can be no education. It must be generous work, too, if liberal culture is to be attained—given for love of the things sought, for knowledge of truth and perception of beauty and strengthening of character; and it ought not to seem to any child or youth merely a race for so many buttons or credits or for nosing out at the finish.

## LETTER VI.

### THE HUMANITIES

SUBJECTS studied in school, broadly divided, fall into four classes. There are, first, the instruments of learning, languages and mathematics, without which advance in any line is impossible. Second, there are the practical studies, leading to craftsmanship and vocation. Third, there are the natural sciences; and fourth, the humanities. Of these four groups, the first two are instrumental in character; they have to do either with the mastery of the keys to study or with the attainment of proficiency in some special art that ministers to one's bread and butter activities. The second two, the sciences and the humanities, are in the nature of ends, rather than means, so far as the life of the individual is concerned; and it is their office to broaden and clarify his impersonal understanding of life,—his political judgment, taken in the widest and truest sense. In my last letter I talked about the general bearings of study of language and number; in future letters I propose to discuss vocational and scientific studies. Here, and in letters immediately following, I wish to dwell upon the significance in education of the study of literature, history, philosophy,—the *litterae humaniores*.

Literature as it should be defined in the conception of teachers is indeed as broad as the humanities: it includes not only the imaginative expression of great minds, in poetry and fiction, but also the intellectual expression which molds the destinies of races and nations and the reflection of thinkers upon both the world of men's affairs and the world of nature. Among the classics of English literature are not only Shakespeare's plays and Thackeray's novels, but Milton's *Areopagitica,* Darwin's *Origin of Species,* the *Federalist Papers,* the Gettysburg speech. The length and breadth and height and depth of human thought about human things is comprised within the radius of the humanities.

Literature in this broad and true sense is not limited by national or linguistic boundaries; it is as extensive as is the world of books. This means that its whole range should, in a sense, be comprised in its beginnings; and that the teacher who undertakes to guide the first interest of children in English literature should already be thinking in the terms of that general European literature, of which English is only a special department. English literature, to be sure, forms our natural introduction to this more general field; and we of the English speech are fortunate, indeed, in possessing natively so noble a contribution to serve as our introduction to the whole. But we should not lose sight of the fact that the completer our acquaintanceship with the whole the truer will be, not only our understanding of the

meaning of letters, but also our understanding of our own literature. European literature, from classical times onward, forms a single and consecutive story, reflecting the achievements of that European civilization and ideal of life which is ours by right of inheritance and development.

All this may be made to begin to appear in the very earliest stages of schooling. I do not, of course, mean that young children should have their attention directed to facts about literary relationships; that would be absurd. But I do mean that in the selection of, say, fairy and other forms of folk tales, of simple ballads, and the like, we are already laying the foundations for an eventual appreciation of European literature as a whole. For both in form and content these tales and ballads are universal, passing from language to language and from century to century with little alteration. They are probably the most ancient and are certainly the most widespread of literary forms. In the course of time a body of classics has been established in this field no less than in the more mature ranges of literary expression; and it should be a part of every child's education to know these classics. For my part, I think it far more important that my boy should know his Aesop and Grimm and Mother Goose than that he should be indulged in the candied tidbits that fill some of our "modern" school readers.

The principle which I am indicating should be

extended from the first reading years to the end of life—the principle of progressive acquaintanceship with the best. The world's body of classics is not so vast but that the greater part of it may become the possession of almost anyone who early develops a taste for it. If teachers, therefore, by taking thought, see to it that in each grade of advancement the boy or girl be shown only the best and be asked to give effort to this alone, it can hardly be but that in time the student's own selective judgment will carry him forward. My own notion is that there are three capital rules which should govern school reading. They are: (1) All formally assigned readings and memorizings should be of acknowledged classics. (2) Assigned readings should always be effort-exacting; the reader must be taught to think as he reads. (3) Reading should be free and extensive; there should be for each reader an unexhausted supply of the best books suitable to his years.

The first of these points hardly needs discussion. The word "classic," to be sure, sticks in the gorge of some; but the thing itself is not terrible if we but recollect that it is used only as meaning what has been tried out and found by long usage to be the best. Most of the works which we call classics—at any rate in the Greek and Latin fields—have been school books for centuries; and they have been chosen and used as school books primarily because they are simple and clear. It is these qualities of

simplicity and clearness, coupled with beauty, nobility and truth of thought, that make classics in all languages; classic literature is therefore in the best sense the most accessible of all literature. There are, of course, classics for all years; children's, youth's, and maturity's. It is the mark of them that through all years they never cease to be classics; so that age still enjoys Aesop and Alice-in-Wonderland possibly more keenly even than does childhood.

In regard to my second rule I feel that more ought to be said. Lowell advised Howells, when the latter was a young author: "Read what will make you think; not what will make you dream." This is the essence of reader's wisdom. There must always be some effort in attaining new ideas if they are really to become incorporated in the body of the reader's thought. The very idea of books is to give a kind of short-cut experience of those parts of the world which are too remote in time or space or in the dimensions of thought to be lived through by everyone. In the world of books we are led through innumerable worlds which could never otherwise be ours. If we would have the full benefit of the adventure it must be a bit strenuous —like all real living. All of which means that the reader ought not perpetually to be renewing his acquaintance with the familiar; but that he should always be adventuring into the unknown in the realm of ideas. Reading ought surely to be pleasant, but it ought quite as surely to call for stout effort and

stiff thinking; it should never (in school) be mere pastime. I say this rather from a university than a grade-school standpoint; for many a time students have complained to me of the difficulty of reading assignments (unfamiliar words, elusive conceptions), as if it were the business of books merely to remind them of what they already know and in words with which they are familiar. But surely no student ought to come to the university with any such preconception; the grade schools should see to that.

My third rule—that reading should be free and extensive—is the most important of all. From the sixth grade upwards, as I guess, there is little need for formal and detailed study of texts in one's own language, while there is every need for the encouragement of free reading. This means a library and the time to use it. Fortunately, no school need be without a library sufficient to any good school's needs. Books were never cheaper than they are to-day, and the best books are the cheapest. I am thinking of such collections of the world's best books as Everyman's Library, as the Oxford classics, or as ex-President Elliot's five feet of Harvard classics—all readable and handy, all easily obtainable and at small expense, and all of them books worth the reading. Give the school boy the run of them, and the growth of his taste need occasion the teacher no worry.

But, you will be asking, is there not to be detailed

class analysis of the great monuments of our literature, especially in the upper grades? Shakespeare, for example. Now it goes without saying that Shakespeare should be a part of the acquisition of every English-speaking school child. But for my part, I can see no good reason for devoting school room time to poring over his texts—a play to the term. It is far better that the student should read all of Shakespeare even with little understanding than that he should know two or three plays, as, alas! sometimes proves, *ad nauseam*. It is not particularly important if he make mistakes of interpretation or miss half the points; for Shakespeare happens to be the sort of a writer whose books last, whose meaning inevitably grows with the re-reading. Indeed, it is a poor book that is exhausted in a single reading, or that is completely understood in any one period of life. A book ought not to be comprehended at the outset; it is enough if it arouse the kind of interest which will bring the reader back to it again and again as life passes Courses in literature, in history, in philosophy, all should encourage wide reading, which in the long run is the only source for true comprehension and the only foundation for a sure taste.

In all this I have been speaking apart from the question of the study of foreign tongues. But this has been in order that I might first of all make the meaning and end of such study clear. For from the point of view of liberal education we study for-

eign languages in order that we may make the acquaintance of their literatures. As I have said, the study of literature is the study of European literature of which English is only a fragment. Not all European languages that have literatures can be taught in the schools; but not all are equally important, and the most important can and should be taught. English is first, grammar and syntax along with literature; but English should be able to take care of itself, almost subconsciously, after the first good start. When, therefore, the schoolboy has reached the place where he will read for himself in his mother-tongue, it is time that he begin the study of one of the other languages which are the instruments of our civilization and the keys to the meaning of history—a stage which I should suppose would be reached in the seventh or eighth grade, and certainly ought not be later than the ninth.

And what should be the first language studied? Well, I am enough of a fogy to say unhesitatingly that it should be Latin. There are a number of reasons for this choice. First, Latin is the key to more centuries of the world's history, and, on the whole, to a greater range of literature (historical and political as well as imaginative) than is any other language. Second, Latin is a key to the understanding of fundamental English, for the majority of our words and forms of expression are directly or indirectly of Latin origin. Third—and by no means least—Latin is the best taught of languages, a sin-

gle year of it giving far more in the way of returns than is to be obtained from the study of any other foreign tongue. Of modern languages I regard French in form and habit, as nearer to English than is any other language, while French literature is far the most important modern literature other than our own. Further, it is so intimately connected with the English that the two may almost to be said to form one great literature. Greek among ancient and German among modern languages are second in importance to Latin and French, and should surely be made accessible in high school for all students having linguistic gifts or literary enthusiasms. But whatever the language studied, it should never be forgotten that, if it be in the interests of liberal education, the study is pursued for the sake of literature, of the *litterae humaniores*. If we study Latin or Greek it is for reading the very words of the great classical authors; if we study French or German or English itself (and English demands hard study for its real mastery), it is in order that we may read French and German and English literature. We should not teach language for the sake of "discipline," far less for the sake of philology, but only for the sake of making readers. But we should remember that in making readers we are giving the best gift that education can give, and performing its highest service to the state; for it is books that transmit civilization and it is the freedom of printed speech that preserves the state.

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## LETTER VII.

### HISTORY

IF letters and numbers are the tools of a liberal education, the structure of the edifice is surely history. Human civilization is not a thing that is created anew in each generation; it is a bequest, a heritage, handed on from the generations of the past, and accumulating with generations. Further, it is by no means transmitted automatically nor without loss; rather, its continuance depends upon conscious effort, the effort of teachers, and upon wise selection of what shall be taught. Each succeeding generation of men—if they are to continue the work of civilization—must have been initiated, as it were, into its mysteries by the men of the preceding generation, and the initiating officers are the teachers. Not all the experience of any single generation can be handed on to its successors, but only the most valuable and significant of its experiences, selected out from the whole. It is such selected experiences, accumulating with the years, that constitute history, and it is these which make possible the culture that separates the civilized man from the untaught savage.

Knowledge of history is the preserver of civiliza-

tion. This being true it is obviously of the first importance that history be thoroughly and wisely taught in the public schools. It should be clear that history, in the scope in which I am conceiving it, is not the record of any one particular form of human activity. It is not (as many of us might think first off) merely the records of the political activities of men—of the rise and fall of nations and states, with the recounting of their battles and the roll of their passing monarchs. Neither is it merely this with the addition of the social and economic changes which influence the destinies of peoples. It includes all these as necessary parts, and in particular national and dynastic records form the frame or guide with reference to which other facts are given orientation in time. But history in its full and significant sense comprises the total record of human achievements in all the great fields. It comprises along with the story of political changes and the record of the spread of the races of mankind over the globe, the history of the growth of ideas in religion and philosophy and literature, the history of discovery in science, the history of invention in art and industry. Religion, letters, art, science, industry,—all these represent the superstructure of civilization, the development of which is made possible (in the higher forms) by political and economic organization. It is mainly these activities which give the value of life. They are, therefore, justly regarded as the measures of civilization; and it is ob-

vious that if the aim of the schools be the preservation and enlargement of the gifts of civilization, no teaching can be more important than is that which strives to make of our citizens qualified judges of these higher forms of human activity. Knowledge of the history of culture—that is, of the development of ideal interests as well as of the course of human events—is thus the completed end of liberal education.

Necessarily, there must be a starting-point in the inculcation of such a vast body of knowledge; and this, without doubt, should be the history of the races and nations of mankind. There must be, first of all, a conception of the beginnings of things human and of the importance of "before and after" in the arrangement of events. Personally I am an arrant rebel against the so-called recapitulation theory as applied to pedagogy,—that is, the notion that every child, in the course of his education, must run the gamut of experiences marking the progress of the race upward from savagery. But I think we may take this one lesson from the untutored child of nature,—namely, that a myth of the beginnings of things is the natural introduction to a conception of history. For it is true that savage peoples have such myths long before they dream of counting their genealogies or telling over the count of their tribal chieftains. Luckily, there are many excellent school readers which tell the story of ancient man, as he was in the dawn of history; and I suppose

that the great body of folklore tales of giants and heroes and princesses and the like, who lived "once upon a time" or "long, long ago," give as good an introduction as one need ask for to the conception of changing times and passing events. Certainly no child should be deprived of them.

Let us suppose, then, this introduction, as belonging to the primary grade. The next step—and it can hardly be emphasized too clearly—is to impart the chronological form of history, the "time-form," by means of which the "before and after" of events is shown in detail. I think I can best illustrate what I mean by reference to a well-known psychological phenomenon. A considerable per cent of those who learn numbers acquire, with their first knowledge of the notation, what is called a "number-form." The number-form is an imaginary spatial arrangement, a picture or mental diagram, of the integers in their natural successions. Often such number-forms begin with a circle, the numbers 1 to 10 running about it clockwise (showing the influence of the dial of the clock, but modified by the power of the decimal idea), while the higher numbers, first in tens, and then in hundreds, run off into space at all sorts of tangents and angles. A person who acquires such a number-form (quite unconsciously) in childhood is virtually certain to carry it through life. Now a chronological time-form is very similar. It also is organized according to the decimal system, into decades and centuries and mil-

## TIME-FORM OF EUROPEAN HISTORY

| | East | West | | | Period |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Paleolithic, or "Old Stone" Age (Many Millenia) | | | | | Prehistoric |
| Neolithic, or "New Stone" Age (10,000–20,000 years) | | | | | |
| 4000 | Alluvial Civilizations in the Nile and Tigris Euphrates Valleys<br>3400 Dynastic Egypt | 4004 The Creation<br>Death of Adam 3074 | Archbishop Ussher's | Neolithic Age | Protohistoric |
| 3000 | Pre-Babylonian States<br>First Maritime Civilization (Aegean) | The Deluge 2348 | | Age of Bronze | Oriental, or Egypto-Semitic — Ancient History |
| 2000 | Ancient Empires<br>(1) Babylonian<br>(2) Egyptian<br>(3) Assyrian | Exodus 1491<br>Kingdom 1095 | Hebrew Chronology | Indo-European Expansion | |
| 1000<br>Annus | First Olympiad 776-5<br>Graeco-Persian Wars 542-480<br>Empire of Alexander 330-323 | Babylonian Captivity 586–516 | | Rome Founded 753<br>Roman Republic 509<br>Augustus Emperor 27 | Hellenic; Hellenistic — Classical |
| Domini | The Roman Empire Falls – 476 | | | | Latin |
| 1000 | Byzantine Empire<br>Rise of the Saracens | Germanic Invasions<br>Charlemagne Emperor 800 | | | Dark Ages — Modern |
| 2000 | The Crusades<br>The Ottoman Empire<br>The Russian Empire | Medieval Church<br>Modern States Forming<br>The Reformation<br>Colonial Empires<br>Modern Science<br>Democracy | | | Medieval; Renaissance; Enlightenment |

lenia, and it has a middle position, or era, with respect to which all the balance is organized. It is simple, to be sure, in its structure; but it is not so simple that it need not be taught, for (I speak from experience) it is altogether easy to find in a group of university students not a few who are unable to define "the Christian Era" with any accuracy, who have only hazy understandings of "B. C." and "A. D." or who fail wholly in attempts to characterize even the greater periods of history, in their time perspective. We are all familiar with the mischief wrought to a child's geographical understanding by the distortions of map projections; only a globe can set him at rights. The same thing is true with respect to the time perspective: its general form, with the Christian Era forming a kind of historian's equator, must be in his mind in order that the student shall correctly place the items of his growing historical knowledge. The whole significance of history is, indeed, dependent upon the order of events in time; and the student who cannot tell what is first and what is second, what is before and what after, misses the conception of historical growth and casuality. In short, what the multiplication tables are to arithmetic or the axioms to geometry, the time-form is to the study of history.

Of course a chronology-form is not a thing to be memorized direct in all its elaborations,—which are indeed complex when taken in connection with the history of mankind over all the globe. Rather it

must be built up, in connection with definite contents, like an arithmetical number-form. Probably, the best method is to approach it from both ends—the modern history of one's own country and ancient history—at the same time. The history of one's own land can be made elementary because of its familiar nearness; ancient history is easy because of its relative simplicity (partly due to our meager knowledge, partly to its restricted character), and because of its association with the Bible, which is the key to our chronological system. Ancient history, moreover, is better capable of being shown as a history of culture in all its variety, than is modern,—I mean for elementary courses. It is not the politics of Egypt or of Greece that appeals to the imagination so much as the art and the modes of life; and all these are simpler in form and more obvious in gradation than in later centuries. One might almost take ancient architecture as the index of the quality of the whole; it is readily intelligible because of the simplicity and symmetry of its members, and it serves as a kind of progressive symbolization of progress,—from the childish, even if huge, pyramids and enclosed temples of Egypt to the open colonades of the Greek and the arches of the Roman civic edifices, as it were framed to admit the spirit of freedom and democracy along with the light of day into the abodes of men.

At the other extreme, American history is begun naturally and vividly with the tales and incidents

that stir patriotic idealism and explain the great national festivals. But its study leads inevitably and early beyond the boundaries of America, back to the Old World, whence our fathers came; and from Britain on to the Continent, and from our own country back through the centuries of the history of western Europe. There is probably in all human history no great episode so broadly unified as is the development of Catholic Christendom out of the ruins of the Roman Empire. It is from this development, either directly or through the reaction of the Reformation, that all modern western nations take their rise and get their color and temper; and it ought to be the easiest of tasks to impress upon the mind of a child who has already grasped the great central fact of the Christian Era the general form of the development, which through mediaeval Christendom, leads from Imperial Rome on into democratical America. Having grasped this fact, he will—I venture to say—have acquired the fundamental key to the understanding of our civilization and of our ideals, political, social, and religious.

For it must be remembered that American history and American institutions (like all other objects of knowledge) can never be understood in isolation. We can only understand what we are in seeing clearly what we are not; and in particular in seeing what we have grown out of being. It is for this reason that American history should lead inevitably into English history, and English into west European, and west European into Roman history,—

where the connection is naturally made with the ancient Mediterranean history, of Egypt, Judea, Greece, in which our civilization has its remote roots. So much of history,—at least so much,—should be mastered in its broad outlines by every youth who leaves the high school (and I am tempted to say, by every youngster through with the grades); for it is fully as important that he have this general background into which to fit the facts which his later knowledge will bring, as it is that he should have a clear conception of the globe and its continents as a foundation for fuller geographical and physiographical knowledge. Time-form and space-form are alike fundamental, if the world is to be understood, or the affairs of life wisely judged.

But I must repeat what I said in the beginning. History is not merely political history—nor merely economic, for nowadays there is an unfortunate and untrue stress laid upon what is called "the economic interpretation of history." History is rather a complex of the development of all human interests. All the great interests—industry, art, science, letters, philosophy, religion,—are not only manifestations of human progress, they are also causes of human progress. My own special field of study is the history of philosophy, that is the history of men's abstract thinking about the meaning of human life; and for the later history of mankind, from the Greeks onward, I am certain that a very clear case might be made for the domination of ideas, as causes of progress and as the true interpreters of

history. It was ideas, for example, that led to the Crusades, that led to the discovery of America, and in large part to its settling; it was ideas, again,—the great ideas expressed in the Declaration of Independence—that brought about our Revolution and the establishment of the United States as a free nation; and it is ideas and an ideal of justice and humanity that have plunged us whole-heartedly into the great European struggle—now, indeed, a world struggle. Ideas and ideals, in art, science, religion, letters, are of tremendous importance in human affairs. Comprehension of them is the beginning of all political wisdom. Comprehension of them is also the surest safeguard of democratical rights, and the true seed of patriotism. It is certain as day, therefore, that a schooling which fails in giving to the growing generation the fullest knowledge of history, in all its bearings, which it is capable of giving is traitorous to its duties. Men must be able intelligently to survey the past of mankind, in order to comprehend the present, in order to look forward to a wisely prepared future. Hence it is that after the tools of learning are mastered, the study of history should be made the core of the curriculum, to be pursued without interruption from the child's first tales of Washington and Lincoln to the college senior's study of the history of philosophy. Even then the subject will but have received an introduction, so vast is its scope. Fortunately, history is the easiest of all subjects to carry forward when school-days are past—the easiest and the most important.

## LETTER VIII.

### THE BIBLE IN THE SCHOOLS

IN my last letters I discussed the place of the humanities and of history in the public school curriculum. In the letter which I now write I propose to discuss a topic immediately related to these, and that is the place of the study of the Bible in the public schools.

This matter is immediately related to the study of the humanities and of history, first of all, because it is a part of such study. The Old Testament is the literature—historical, poetical, and philosophical—of an ancient nation having in antiquity more than a thousand years of recorded history, and a nation which has been second to none in its influence upon the subsequent history of the western world. That its influence, like that of the Greeks, has been exclusively in the domain of ideas and ideal influences but renders the more patent the necessity, which every person who can pretend to historical learning must recognize, of an intimate acquaintance with its literature. The two great sources of ideas at the foundation of European civilization are the Greek and the Hebrew; the thought and experience of both of these ancient peoples is still living and

vital in our society, in the one case in art, philosophy, and science, in the other in religion and in the interpretation of history. Obviously, he who would understand the modern world must be familiar with its great beginnings in the literatures and records of these ancient peoples.

Of course the Old Testament cannot be separated from the New, in this consideration. Nor is there any reason why it should be so; for every reason which can be urged for an acquaintance with the Old Testament applies equally to the New; from any point of view it is a book of profound significance in the development of the thought of the western world. The very fact that we mark our era and tell our time with reference to events narrated in the New Testament indicates the tremendous significance which these events have for our imaginations and for our interpretations of human life. Indeed, as I indicated in my last letter, the first lesson which a child must learn, who would be at all instructed in history, is the meaning of the Christian Era; and again as I indicated, the readiest and best approach to a comprehension of history is through the chronological arrangement of Biblical events as formulated in theological tradition—such an arrangement as is given by Archbishop Ussher, and was indicated in the "time-form of European history" which accompanied my last letter. This, I say, is easy to impress upon a child's mind, both because of its simplicity of form and because of its

dramatic appeal; for we should not overlook the fact that the Bible, in spite of its being a collection of books composed through a series of centuries, has none the less in its organization and scope the form of a great drama of history and of the world, and is in this sense alone the most stupendous co-ordination of ideas yet achieved by mankind. Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*—surely the noblest poems in the English language—are an interpretation of this Biblical drama of the world, which in the course of centuries has become so deep-seated in the European mind that it colors all forms of speculation: politics, history, geology, astronomy, to say nothing of art and literature, have been and are influenced beyond count by Biblical ideas. It goes without saying, therefore, that knowledge of these ideas is a pre-requisite to an understanding of ourselves.

But it is not merely for its historical significance, fundamental as this is, that the study of the Bible is important from a public school point of view. It must also be regarded as a great and moving record of human experience, and of experiences which time has shown to possess the most profound power to mould the sentiments of mankind. In this sense the Bible is not only to be reckoned among the humanities, but it is by all odds the foremost of the humanities. No one can for a moment question it's pre-eminence among the ideal forces which have gone to the making of the mental attitudes of men

of the present day. Here again we come to the final issue of education; namely, the comprehension of human nature in its subtlest and most enduring interests, to the end that we may be able to live the lives of self-comprehending men, and therefore of self-responsible citizens. Such comprehension demands perspective, and in particular it demands the power to enter imaginatively into the great movements of the past, which have been profound determinants of later conduct. If the Bible contained no more than the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles of the New Testament, it would still be incomparably the most significant of our records out of the past; for in these tracts (which is what first they were), we have the picture of the greatest ideal movement which has ever influenced mankind—a movement which made its century the first of our era, and without rival the most striking century in the whole story of human progress. This judgment I believe must be confirmed by every student of human history, no matter what his views as to the final interpretation of the Scriptures.

Reasons such as I have given make it certain that the Bible is a proper subject for school instruction. It is of first order in intrinsic significance, and other subjects, both scientific and historical, cannot be fully understood apart from Biblical knowledge. But there are yet other considerations which emphasize this importance of the book. I refer to its

contemporary meaning in intellectual and religious experience.

The first of these, the intellectual, apart from the historical and humanitarian values which I have already discussed, is a literary value. As literature the Bible is a very extraordinary book, most extraordinary, I think, from the fact that in the long run it has been more influential in translations than in the original texts. In English, for example, there is no book by a native author, not even Shakespeare which has had so profound an influence, not only upon the thought of English-speaking peoples but upon the style and quality of the language itself, as has the King James version of the Bible. The imagery and diction of this version are so characteristic that we regard its style as the finest model we possess for simple and forceful as well as for noble discourse. Moreover, many books and passages of the Bible are themselves examples of sublimity not only in matters of style, but in that union of exalted style with exalted thought which Longinus regards as the supreme achievement of literature; nor is it without thought that Longinus—though a pagan himself—cites the beginning of Genesis as a high example of sublimity. Similarly, Watts-Dunton, the British poet and critic, speaks of the Biblical psalm as constituting a special form of the lyric poem, which he terms "the Great Lyric" and which he places alongside of the tragic drama

and epic poem as supreme among the forms of human literary expression.

The Bible is, of course, the most read book in the world. It is also the most edited and translated. In the English-speaking world familiarity with the authorized version is all that is strictly to be demanded of a man of culture and all that the schools need take greatly into account. Nevertheless, there is another version of the Bible which ought to some extent be known, especially by persons who make literature an important part of their study. This is the Latin Vulgate, the style of which not only served as the model for the English of the authorized version, but has in innumerable ways affected the development of literary expression. There is, indeed, a whole field of profoundly moving Latin literature, the Latin literature of the church of the Middle Ages, to which the Vulgate is the natural introduction; and it is my own opinion that, in the university at least, this field and type of Latin (for the style is as distinctive as is Biblical English) ought to be given a position little short of that accorded to classical Latin. Certainly, here is another reason for the stressing of the study of the classical languages; for Latin is the tongue of one of the greatest fields of European literature, the Christian literature of the church, while Greek is, of course, the original language of the New Testament and of the Septuagint version of the Old. It has been the habit of educators to regard knowledge of

these as necessary only in the case of clergymen and theologians, but this is certainly an erroneous view so far, at least, as the Vulgate Bible is concerned; its phrases re-echo throughout the whole range of the European literature of our era.

But what of the Bible as a religious book? Dare the schools tamper with the great source of religious instruction more or less jealously interpreted by the many groups of Christian sectaries? The question is certainly a delicate one; it has been and is the cause of the gingerly fashion in which the public schools approach instruction in Biblical learning. Nevertheless, it seems to me that it is by no means an insoluble problem. Knowledge of the Bible is a vastly important factor in a sound liberal education; this is undeniable, and it is this fact which makes the duty of the schools to offer instruction in this as in other liberal branches obvious. Granted the duty, the tactful means should be discoverable. It is surely an anomaly that we have numbers of private schools supported along with our public schools to give this form of instruction, which the parents of the children who attend these private schools rightfully regard as important.

Possibly if we call to mind the circumstances which have induced the present attitude of the public schools with respect to this subject, we may be in a better position to pass judgment upon sound policy. These circumstances go far back in the history of our education, finding their roots in the two

great cultural movements which introduced what we call the modern period of western history. I refer to the Renaissance and the Reformation. On the side of book-learning, the Renaissance was marked first and essentially by its tremendous interest in the pagan classics of Greece and Rome. In the Middle Ages the universities had given no instruction in the pagan humanities, and had, indeed, in particular frowned upon a too close acquaitance with the writings of the pagan poets. Theology, philosophy, and poetry all had their ecclesiastical forms distinct in spirit and form from the classics. But the Renaissance humanists were immensely taken with the rediscovered monuments of pagan literature; they developed, indeed, a veritable cult of these "humanities" (as distinguished from theological studies), and out of this enthusiasm grew the modern academic "classical" education, stressing pagan and avoiding Christian culture. To a not inconsiderable degree the Renaissance reaction against the mediaeval schools is the source of our modern liberal arts college; and since the liberalism of the college is reflected in the secondary schools, the whole tendency of the Renaissance spirit has been to secularize educational ideals —leaving, of course, the matter of religious (and Biblical) instruction in the hands of the churches.

The Reformation raised still another issue. The mediaeval church had been eminently political and in general international. With the Reformation

came the rupture of Protestant and Catholic and at the same time the establishment of national churches. The conflict of church and state which grew out of these movements has had various forms: the form of the antagonism of Protestant nations, with their own national churches against Catholic internationalism; the conflict of Protestant sects, not officially recognized with the established churches, and finally the conflict of the political publics of various nations (including our own at its foundation) with the whole idea of politically recognized religious bodies. These varied conflicts, which in some countries are still undetermined, have given rise to a general modern sentiment, especially in the democratic nations, that the political society should be tolerant of all denominations and should favor none; and hence to a general conviction that public school instruction should be, as it were, neutral in all matters touching religion. It is this feeling, indeed, which has had most to do with the discouraging of Bible study in the public schools of the United States.

But it is obvious that these influences, both of the Renaissance and of the Reformation, are not vital in our country and time; they belong to the Old World and to former centuries. The United States has nothing to fear politically from ecclesiasticism within its borders, while the academic tradition with respect to the classics is already tremendously weakened by the broadening of modern

curricula. Indeed, teachers of the classics should gladly welcome such an added incentive to their cultivation as is afforded by interest in the Christian Latin literature. When such supreme poets as the Catholic Dante and the Protestant Milton can be comprehended only by a combined knowledge of the Bible and the pagan classics it is clear that the humanist cannot dispense with either source.

The final matter is purely one of method. How should Bible study be handled in the public schools? The answer can only come in full from trial, but I think I can point to at least two lines of approach at once important, easy and beyond criticism. The first of these is the historical, which I have already mentioned. Biblical history should be taught as a part of ancient history and as a clue to the understanding of all history. This is in part done already in school text-books in ancient history, but these text-books are rarely brought into connection with the Biblical narratives, a task which every teacher of school history should see through, if for no other reason than to keep the mind of the young from an utter confusion, and from what sometimes happens, a contempt for the historical value of the Bible itself. If the book were used for what it certainly is, one of the most important of all our sources of knowledge of ancient history, it could hardly fail to command an attention and respect which too many of us can testify is now wanting.

My second suggestion has to do with the use of

the Biblical text itself. The telling of Bible stories to the young in other than the language of the Bible seems to me a waste and a wrong. It is a waste because the text is already a classic of the highest order, and needs only the custom of hearing in order to be understood even by the very young. It is a wrong because it should be a part of the educational birthright of every English-speaking child to become intimate with the style and form of the authorized version of King James, which, as Cardinal Newman, himself a Catholic, has said, can never be replaced in the affections of the English-speaking world by any other version.

If each teacher in the grade schools were to make it a custom to read daily chapters or passages of the authorized version to the school, omitting comment, I cannot perceive that public objection could attach to the custom, while, in the way of gain, not a child who had passed through a series of years under the influence of such readings but would have acquired ineradicable impressions of the highest value for the development of both his intellectual and his moral character.

## LETTER IX.

### NATURE AND SCIENCE

WHAT is called "nature study" at the primary end and "the natural sciences" at the university end of a school career forms a group of subjects which in matter and manner stand in conscious contrast with the humanities. The humanities are concerned with men, their affairs, ideas, expression; the study of nature is concerned with those conditions under which men live that are beyond human power to create—with the whole environment of life, in short, with the physical world. History is the center and frame of the humanities; cosmology, the architecture of the universe, is the center and frame of the study of nature. The two groups of studies are thus contrasting and complementary; one might well put it, that the study of nature and the sciences gives the staging and scenery, the study of the humanities gives the action of the drama of life. Neither is dispensable to a true enlightenment.

The great purpose of the study of nature is to give the setting of life. It must give a conception of the form of the heavens and of the movements of the stars, and of the sun and earth, and of the

changing hours of the day and seasons of the year; and this we call astronomy. It must give a conception of the structure and formation of the earth on which we dwell, zone and clime, sea and continent; and this we call geology and geography. It must give an understanding of the forms of movement, molar and molecular, and of all the varied energies which appear to us as material things and phenomena; and this we call mechanical, physical, chemical science. It must also give an understanding of the development, variety, and activities of living beings, vegetal and animal; and this is biological science, with botany and zoology as its fundamental divisions, and many special branches—morphological, physiological, pathological—dealing with particular phases of the complex whole. Finally, the scientific study of nature includes the study of man himself as an animal and as a social being—for man, too, is a part of the furniture of creation; and here we have the anthropological and psychological sciences, the political, economic, and social sciences.

In the pursuit of studies chosen from so vast an array of subjects it is all too easy to become absorbed in the details of special mastery at a cost of the loss of an understanding of what the general objects of the study of nature should be. It is clear enough that the teaching of nature study and of the sciences can be intelligent only when these objects are understood by the teacher and made plain to the pupil. It becomes, therefore, the teacher's first

# CLASSIFICATION OF THE SCIENCES

## SCIENCES OF METHOD

I LINGUISTIC = GRAMMAR, LOGIC
II MATHEMATICAL = ALL BRANCHES OF MATHEMATICS.
III TECHNICAL = LABORATORY AND FIELD TECHNIQUE

## SCIENCES OF NATURE

| | Theoretical | | Applied |
|---|---|---|---|
| I<br>PHYSICAL | DESCRIPTIVE | ASTRONOMY<br>GEOGRAPHY<br>MECHANICS | CHRONOMETRY<br>SURVEYING<br>ENGINEERING |
| | GENETIC | ASTROPHYSICS<br>GEOLOGY<br>PHYSICS + CHEMISTRY | |
| II<br>BIOLOGICAL<br>(a) BOTANICAL<br>(b) ZOOLOGICAL | DESCRIPTIVE | MORPHOLOGY<br>PHYSIOLOGY<br>BIONOMICS | HUSBANDRY<br>BREEDING<br>THERAPY |
| | GENETIC | ONTOGENY<br>PHYLOGENY<br>PATHOLOGY | |

## SCIENCES OF MAN

| | Theoretical | | Applied |
|---|---|---|---|
| I<br>BIOPHYSICAL | PSYCHOPHYSICAL | ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY<br>PSYCHOLOGY<br>PATHOLOGY | MEDICINE<br>ANALYSIS AND MAINTENANCE OF HUMAN NORMALITY |
| | ANTHROPOLOGICAL | ETHNOLOGY<br>PHILOLOGY | |
| II<br>SOCIAL | SOCIOLOGY<br>ECONOMICS<br>POLITICAL SCIENCE | | LAW<br>ANALYSIS AND GUIDANCE OF HUMAN POSSIBILITIES |
| III<br>PHILOSOPHICAL | ETHICS + POLITICS<br>AESTHETICS<br>METAPHYSICS | | CRITICISM OF LIFE'S ENDS AND AIMS |

duty to keep their definition always in mind, as a kind of mental reservation guiding all instruction even if not explicit in it.

These objects of the study of nature are in general represented by the distinction between "theoretical" and "applied" science—and there is not a single field of science which has not these two forms. Theoretical science is that which undertakes no more than to answer the questions put by our natural human curiosity. "All men by nature desire to know," is the first sentence in Aristotle's Metaphysics, and it expresses a truth of human nature which the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge in Eden (for which, I imagine, none of us are profoundly sorry) is but another and allegorical expression. As put in a more modern form, science is first of all an investigation into truth—truth for its own sake, irrespective of all desires or preferences. This may be thrown into relation with the great fundamental fact that all theoretical science is interested in the discovery of law, and that the phrase "scientific law" has become for us the modern substitute for an ancient notion of fate or necessity. The laws of science—such as the great physical law of gravitation, or the great biological law of the evolution of life—are not at all "laws" in our human and legal sense of the word. Scientific laws are impartial statements of how natural forces operate, of how things act, whether these things be moving stars, blossoming plants, or fluc-

tuating prices on the stock exchange. Political and moral laws are imperative statements of how men ought to act under given circumstances. We "obey" scientific law only in the sense that there is no possible deviation from it; we "obey" civil and moral law only in a sense which implies possible disobedience. Furthermore, the fundamental aim of knowledge of natural law is knowledge of truth; it answers to an appetite for knowing and understanding. The fundamental aim of civil law is attainment of the good; it answers to our hopes for the betterment of society.

The first gift of the study of nature is, then, respect—nay, reverence, for the truth, irrespective of its effect upon us. It is in this sense that the study of nature and of the sciences is a liberalizing study, and a proper part of a liberal education. Of course, in last analysis, we believe the effect to be the good of society. It is good just because it develops a special attitude of mind which we call the "scientific attitude," and which is an attitude of impartiality and exactitude toward facts, and of an earnest desire to get at and understand all facts, and therefore of a love of truth in all things. And this attitude of fairness and truthfulness is of immense value to men in all their social relations. Who, for example, can imagine any attitude in a judge that would better serve justice than must a love of the truth? Or who can conceive a legislator better fitted for his task than by an ability to see facts and conditions

impartially and impersonally? The "scientific attitude" is of so enormous an importance to society that the greatest educational effort is justified in securing its development in the greatest possible number of citizens; and it would be a negligent teacher of science, or of that "nature study" which leads up to science, who could ever forget that his first and paramount purpose must be the cultivation of the love of truth and the power to perceive it. This is the corner-stone value of science to society, and therefore in education.

What are called the "empirical method" and the "virtue of suspended judgment," or "scientific caution," are all but special phases of the scientific attitude, and all rest upon the fundamental fact of the love of truth. The empirical method means really nothing more than painstaking in the discovery of facts; suspended judgment means open-mindedness in the reading of facts, and a willingness to change one's mind. These, also, as anyone must recognize, are social virtues of the greatest value in human society—where men are all too ready to suspect one another's motives without due investigation. Indeed, one might say that just as the scientific love of truth is but a special cultivation of the virtue of honesty, so scientific caution is but a special cultivation of the virtue of generosity—and all that cultivates such virtues cannot but make for the good of society.

Thus it is that while theoretical science does not

aim directly at the good of society, indirectly it is of immense significance in the securing of the general good. "Applied science," on the other hand, is the direct use of scientific truths for the social good. "Applied science" means merely that knowledge acquired in the theoretical spirit is used in the securing of desirable ends. A most obvious science of this sort is medicine, which has its theoretical aspect (as when the physician speaks of his patient as a "case"), but which is and is felt by most persons to be cultivated primarily for the healing of the sick. Not less obviously useful are engineering and agricultural science, in each case representing the application of facts discovered in the theoretical spirit to the needs and enterprises of men. In truth there is no science that has not its form of application; even the astronomer's knowledge of stars measurelessly remote from earth is practically important in the observations by means of which he regulates and synchronizes all the clocks that strike together, telling the hours of work and the hours of rest throughout the civilized world. Nay, the applications of science are so many and important that they are rather a menace to the teacher's and the student's understanding, than a help to it; and one of the serious problems which educators face at this hour is the quite inevitable tendency of all minds to emphasize the value of applied science to the clouding of their consciousness of the prior and greater importance of theoretical science. For unless the cultiva-

tion of the "scientific attitude" be maintained in its purity, by the cultivation of theoretical science, the whole structure of scientific knowledge will inevitably degenerate into a series of specialized crafts or trades: the mechanic, the inventor, and the virtuoso will take the place of the investigator, and scientific discovery will be at an end. There is profound significance in the fact that in this present tremendous war the methods which the government of the United States is making most use of have been contrived for it, not by specialist scientists of the great manufacturing plants, but by the theoretical scientists of our universities; and when the history of the war is written no single class of men in the nation will be found to have done, I will not say more, but so much for the common cause, as have the trained university men.

In so fully sketching the importance of the study of nature in education, I have allowed myself little space for a consideration of the method. But little space is needed if the fundamental fact be grasped that the teacher's first and constant task must be the cultivation of the virtues of the scientific attitude.

As in the case of history, where a time-form is the elementary necessity, so in the case of nature study my own view is that a space-form is the elementary necessity. The first book I can remember being fascinated by (before I could read) was a little yellow-backed geography having for frontispiece a crude

diagram of our solar system—sun, moon and earth—Jupiter with his satelites, Saturn with his rings. That gave me a space-form for my knowledge of nature—which has, I trust, grown with the years; and I cannot imagine a better introduction. Nowadays teachers begin the study of geography with the schoolyard and town, and then go on to county, state, nation, and globe—like a sort of induction; and I do not quarrel with the method except when it is used alone. But just as in the study of history, we should begin not only with the near story of the United States but also with the remote one of ancient history and the Biblical time-form, so in the study of nature we should unite with attention turned to the near environment an attention directed to the world as a whole. By and large, I believe the most valuable single piece of apparatus a school can own is a good globe (or even a poor one). As the Greeks wisely saw, the circle and the sphere are the simplest of spatial ideas, and the beginning infant is already endowed with an understanding that will enable him to grasp the notion that he lives upon a revolving ball, and that all celestial bodies move in gracious curves.

In the advance, on through geography and elementary astronomy to the story of the earth's formation and the classification of plant and animal life, the grades will have performed their necessary introduction to the more detailed work undertaken by the high school and college. Certainly, it should

not be until the high school is reached that any emphasis should be laid upon method—or the word itself used. Children look outwardly and wonderingly at a vastly interesting world, and it could be only crime to call their attention to themselves—for the study of method is but a form of introspection. Nor should method ever (short of a post-graduate college) be made more important than the matter; there is an immense lot to be learned in the study of nature, and there need be but one rule in its inculcation, and that is that it be taught sanely. My notion of sanity in nature study I have, I trust, made clear; it must be the constant and conscious preservation of a mind single upon the truth, seeking ever to conform to the good scientific rule of parsimony (not to use hypotheses beyond necessity) and to give, if naught else, a true comprehension to the meaning of law as applied to the world of nature's phenomena.

There is, of course, also a humanistic phase to the study of science, and this is the study of the history of science, which is today rapidly coming forward as a university branch. Indeed, a most interesting theory of a "new humanism" based primarily upon the history of science is advocated by George Sarton, in a recent number of *Scientia,* in which the author would replace the "old humanism" almost wholly by a study of scientific progress. This, it is needless for me to say, is going beyond reason. But I do believe, and have long believed, that the study

of the history of science is one of the most valuable of the means open to a liberal training in the schools; and were I the organizer of college curricula, I should place it in the first year of college work, encouraging students to enter into the specialized and limited work of the laboratory courses only after they had made such a survey of the growth and meaning of the study of nature, in the history of mankind, as should serve to keep clear before them the great ends which this study should follow and the great benefits which it may bring to the state and to the ennoblement of human nature.

## LETTER X

### CRAFTS AND VOCATIONS

IN several of the letters which I have written I have touched upon the "vocational" side of public school education, stating that vocational training should and must hold its place in our schooling, even if that place be properly but a secondary one. I shall now try to make my view of this important matter clear.

And to begin with, I would emphasize anew the fundamental fact that in a democratic government, such as ours, the first vocation of everyone is his citizenship. A democratic citizen is called upon, not merely to execute, but to judge public policies; and the power of judgment, which is the power of seeing things impersonally and impartially, with no side-glance at one's private interests, is the power which public education must first of all cultivate. This, I am convinced, can only be done by means of the education we call liberal—by means of the study of mathematics and literature, of history and science, pursued not as leading to a private profession, but as leading to a public understanding. The liberal schooling is the vocational training of the citizen—of that capacity in a man by reason of

which he may even be called upon to condemn himself (as Rousseau remarks) for the sake of the law—and without such training no democracy can long continue to be a democracy. "Vocational training," when it means, as so often it is taken to mean, the study of a craft or profession to the neglect of liberal culture, is proper enough in an aristocratic or autocratic form of government; but, pursued in this narrow fashion, it spells the ruin of democratic states.

What, then, should be our attitude toward the technical elements in education and toward technical schools? How far are "industrialism" and "vocationalism" justified in state-supported, free education? In particular, what are the social and what are the private values in such training?

As a first principle it may be laid down that free technical training by the state is justified only by its good to the state. The work of modern civilization is tremendously complex; it can be carried on and preserved only where there is present in society a large number of technicians. There must be physicians, lawyers, clergymen, commercial experts, engineers of a dozen varieties, trained agriculturists—and, indeed, specialists in things near and remote, from decipherers of cuneiform inscriptions to tea-tasters and parasitologists. All of these are necessary to the state; and to satisfy such necessities the state very properly provides the educational means. From the point of view of the public in-

terest it is, and should be, only accidental that this training works to the advantage of those who receive the education; they are trained for the public service, not for their private welfares. This fact is of vast importance and ought to be made the guiding principle in all organization of vocational work.

It is true that there is another type of public interest that is subserved by technical education, which falls in accord with private interest. I mean what is called the general welfare of a citizenry. A state, and in particular a democratic state, exists only for the welfare of its citizens, and no small part of this welfare is the mental comfort which comes of congenial employment. When, therefore, a state is giving a boy with a taste for art or a gift for engineering the opportunity of cultivating his taste or gift, it is serving not only its own interests, in producing an artist or an engineer as a member of society, but it is serving its proper end in finding a congenial service for its citizen. The congeniality of the service will be reflected back in better effort, a heightened love of country, a happier life,—all tending to the common good. This, of course, is not distinctive of vocational education; it is a part of the gift of all education; but it is in opening the choice of a vocation to youth naturally endowed with ambition that it is most in evidence.

Such are the public benefits of vocational schooling; the private benefits are also two in kind. There is, first, the "bread and butter" value—training

for money-getting; expert knowledge or skill calls for unusual endowments and effort and it commands, as a rule, more than the average financial returns of labor. This is a fact so obvious that it needs no emphasis, and it is a fact far too often emphasized. For it is clearly but a selfish motive, in itself; and in matters of education, least of all, can we afford to lay stress upon appeals to self-interest. The vocational training is necessary to the state, and should be included in educational opportunity; but every youth undertaking the mastery of a vocation should have it constantly impressed upon his mind that the object of the state, in giving him unusual opportunties, is to make him publicly serviceable, not privately wealthy. His debt is to the state; and for all that he receives, above the opportunity for practical service, he owes gratitude and the obligations of enlightened citizenship.

In a second mode vocational training is of private benefit. Here I refer to the craftsmanship and technique given by the forms of special training. Hand and eye are made adept and co-ordinate at bench and forge. Powers of observation, delicacy of adjustment, sense of precision, all are cultivated by the laboratory. The library, I have said, is the core and support of liberal culture, for books open out to us ranges of experience vastly beyond anything we can hope to traverse in the body. None the less, it is true that this experience must always be in essence imaginative; book knowledge moves

in a realm of ideas, of forms, which, however rich and broad, must always lack something of the reality of what we directly and bodily undergo. Training in craftsmanship and technique gives the necessary complement to the cultivation of the ideal powers, leading to readiness in bodily adaptation and quickness in sense-discrimination. The importance of such training of hand and eye is very great; but it should not be overlooked that, compared with the mastery of books, it is a very simple problem. Life itself is a manual teacher for the normal human being, and it is certainly the rare child who does not get far more benefit from the rough-and-tumble world of out-of-doors than from all the shops of all the schools. The school shops give certain valuable additions, and, in conjunction with the laboratory, a sound training in exactitude, but it is nature herself who gives the first instruction and last diploma in the active realm of experience.

A clear perception that the proper benefits of vocational training are such as I have outlined, and that this training stands in such subordination to the liberal branches as I have indicated, is the safest guide to its right introduction into the curriculum. There is no question but that the average boy or girl has time, along with liberal studies, for a very thorough discipline in craftsmanship. Indeed, properly handled, such discipline comes rather as a phase of sport than as a toil; for children are naturally drawn to tasks where muscles and sense are called

into play. My notion—which I believe I mentioned in an earlier letter—is that the shop and laboratory end of the school plant ought to be open and busy at all hours of the day; and I hold to this because I cannot doubt that the mere presence of usable apparatus will act as a magnet to draw youthful energies into activity. This is especially true in cities, where the youngster's opportunities for independent or unpoliced action are but too few and ill considered. There is an eternal and invincible love of discovery and invention in the soul of youth, so that with a minimum of guidance children become naturalists and makers and artists. One need but supply the magnifying lens, the brushes, the tools, and give the privilege of their free use, and half the training is accomplished.

On this foundation of the youngster's native eagerness for creative employment, the earlier phases of manual and technical work ought wholly to rest. The good which comes of trained hand and trained sense would thus come, and come naturally, with no thought of a special application. The practical understanding of wood-working, or mechanical and electrical contrivance, of gardening, of the in-door arts, all should find foundation in opportunities offered by the school, but taken to in a vacation spirit, with little thought of gradings and none of vocation. That such knowledge might become useful later on in life should safely be left to happy chance.

Indeed, no youth for whom life holds the opportunity for a complete education ought to be thinking of vocation short of college years. Children surely must be taught to work, and youth to be industrious, but this need not and should not mean the selection of a profession at the age of six or sixteen. The selection of a profession is a private and selfish concern, and youth, which all men agree to name generous, is no time for the emphasis of selfish interests. Rather, let each youngster be taught that the work of his time of life is the work of getting a general understanding of the structure and meaning of society as a whole, in all its history and all its problems, and that the state can allow him whatever time he needs for the finding of his own appropriate economic niche. I am no believer in short-cut courses to trades and professions; the years that appear to be saved by such devices are dearly bought by the society that provides them and by the individual who avails himself of them. "Speeding up" is no part of a sound education, and the teacher should be the last of men to urge the young to be thinking of time.

"Vocationalism" is the noisest cry of our times in the educational world, and there is certainly no danger that the thing itself will be deprived of its proper place in the public schooling. But there is danger, indeed, a whole group of dangers, attending its placing. The first of these is disproportionate and untimely emphasis of the importance of vo-

cation in life. Society itself, the whole environment of an industrial and commercial world, sufficiently emphasizes this importance; and there is really no danger that young America will grow up to idleness; work is a part of our national genius. The teacher, therefore, and the schools, should be indulgently skeptical of the boy's first ambitions, and never rush to set him in them; he has plenty of time to change, and if he is a growing and energetic boy will change them many a time before his school days are at an end. Let him, if he must be a tradesman, be jack-of-all-trades, at least in boyhood; specialization is only a form of slow suicide.

Again there is the danger of distorted attitude. This comes from the teacher's side quite as much as from the pupil's, for it is the teacher who can and should keep clear before the pupil's mind his dignity as a citizen and his responsibilities as a citizen. I suspect that if even the kindergartner were to say to herself, if not to the small fry, when she greets her brood of a morning, "Fellow citizens!" —I suspect that her teaching would be philosophically sounder and practically safer; I am sure that this is true of the upward stages. After six months of school I asked my eight-year-old what he had learned, what new thing, out of his schooling. With much deliberation: "Well, I've learned a new word, daddy." "What is it?" "Commerce." Commerce! It is a good and significant word; but I cannot but feel that it was an evil chance (for I refuse to credit

it to the school) that gave him just this as the first meaning of education.

Teachers, like the other members of the modern state, are by force of human limitation specialists. As we pass on to high school and college, they become narrowed and differentiated to limited fields of learning and instruction. But teachers, most of all, should fight against the distortions of sanity which specialization brings in its train. For it is not only their own souls that are at stake, but the souls of the younger generations passing under their yearly influences. It is all too easy to see the importance of one's own field, and to make it supreme. It is hard, indeed, to maintain a level view of all the various activities that make up the round of human life. But the end which that view subserves is the preservation of the truth and vitality of the democracy, and no effort can be too arduous when so great an end is in contemplation.

I have said, once before, that education in a democratic state is necessarily expensive. It is so just because it must first of all be liberal. This does not mean that the vocation can be neglected; the complexities of civilization effectually prevent that. But it does mean that the vocation must be delayed, and that the educational period of life must not be looked upon (as too often it is) as but a preparation for life, a kind of trades apprenticeship. Rather it means that the life of youth and the years of schooling must be viewed as citizens' work and as human

right, and as in themselves an important addition to the meaning of the whole of life to the whole of society. But this topic is important; it deserves an entire letter, and that shall be my next.

## LETTER XI

### THE LIFE OF YOUTH

ONE of the aspects of public education which teachers, more than others, are apt to forget is that the schools do not exist solely for the sake of the formal instruction given in them. The curriculum bulks large in the school economy—that goes without saying; and all other activities must be organized around it; it represents school work, and its mastery the first measure of the school's efficiency. But still it ought not to be overlooked by teachers (as it is little likely to be by the exuberant youth) that the school years include time for much more than the formal work, or that there are school avocations along with the school vocation of study. We should remember, in short, that the word "school" itself harks back to a Greek word meaning "leisure" and that leisure, for all active and healthy human beings, signifies not the opportunity for idleness, but the opportunity for self-initiated and self-directed activity. We may call this activity, play or sport or dreaming or invention, but wherever (as in all these things it does) it signifies physical or mental action of a spontaneous sort no sane judge of human nature can doubt that it is a part of a

hale and normal life, and no true teacher can wish for a school system which fails to recognize the right of these free activities along with the need for the disciplinary ones of the class room.

The fact for first emphasis in our consciousness is that the school years represent *a time of life*—the one great time of life, we are prone to say as retrospectively we survey it. There is a Puritanical cant in the not uncommon talk about education as forming "a preparation for life" and of the school years ending in a "commencement"—as if the pupil were indeed a pupa, hatching into an existence worth having only when his school days were at an end. Along with this goes the mature person's notion that he is "supporting" the schools, as, in a sort, eleemosynary incubators of citizens. Both of these notions should be reversed. The infant in the primary is already a citizen, doing citizen's work, and therein doing a part of his life work; his position in society is just as dignified and honest and profitable as is that of merchant, farmer, mechanic, or judge, and he is entitled to entire respect for what he does. Your youngster has all the natural marks of *homo sapiens;* he is engaged in the proper duties of *homo civilis;* to him belong, therefore, the full rights of man and citizen, returns along with obligations. It is mere pedagogic Calvinism to look upon childhood as corrupted with some natural damnation which schooling must purify out; rather, the congregation of American citizenship has room for

every age and condition, and would be decrepit without all—and most decrepit were infancy rare.

School years, then, represent citizens' life and school work is citizens' duty; and schools are no more public charities than are court houses or department stores. We all know this, upon reflection, but we do not always talk as if we were bearing it in mind. And the consequences of bearing it in mind should be significant. First, they should keep—public and teacher alike—lively in consciousness the fact that the school child has rights of his own; and second, the fact that it is not wholly yours to define these rights, that the child himself has something to say about it.

It is the second part of my proposition that is important in the saying (for voices enough proclaim the rights of children). What I mean is this. Childhood and youth, as a life period, has its own desires and its own satisfactions, just as has any other period of life. Infants, for example, love rattles and gurglings and heels kicking the free air; boys of ten are full of device, directed to the reformation of the world by the simple instrumentalities of jack knives, string, and chalk, and our back yards are the scenes of many Utopias; their elders of fifteen or thereabouts, are fired by high imaginings to which their material environment offers but the most trivial response, so that they live in unseen politics, which we name their ambitions. We, their sedate elders (and note "sedate," from *sedere,* to

sit), having heels weighted to earth, and having our own ideas about orderliness in the back yard, and having in the mill of experience, found more chaff than meal in our ambitions—we look back upon these affairs of younger years and dub them puerilities. Wisdom is ours, we say, and we propose to give the profit of it, willy-nilly, to the oncoming generation.

This is wrong from both the youngster's point of view and our own. For he, in order that his soul may be his own, and that is to say in order that it may be a freeman's soul, must explore it for himself, and very much in his own way. The variety that is in man is beyond measure wonderful, but like variety elsewhere in nature it must have opportunity of unconstrained growth in order that its character and possibilities be made apparent. Gardening is a capital means for training and intensifying the known fruitfulness of known plants; but gardening, when the crop is exclusively in mind, bends to order and uniformity and trim compactness. Society, with its laws and fashions and institutions, is all to the gardener's ideal; it grows what it wishes and eradicates what it wishes (all within limits), and produces uniformity and order and like-mindedness of man with man. Certainly this must and should be the case if we are to have institutional states and the thing we call civilization. But certainly, too, we must not overlook, in our anxiety to train aright, the complementary need for

the spontaneous off-shooting of human ideals—originality, invention, all that makes for that other thing we believe in, along with our belief in order and civilization, which we call human progress. Human progress is always in the hands of the coming generation. It is always the outcome of some variation in human appetite, and of some factor in which the younger contradicts the elder mind of man. This fact alone, should keep us loth to bind the fancy of youth beyond stringent necessity.

Of course there is necessity for some restriction. I am not urging an unlimited indulgence, at home or in school. I have not forgotten (and, being a teacher, am little likely to forget) that study is the first duty of the schoolboy; that that duty is a social duty; and that its observance is his good citizenship. I believe all this; but I also believe that, outside the study hours—and there should be an ample outside—there should be encouragement of independence, there should be freedom from useless advice, and above all that the youngster has a right to his own spiritual privacy. Each man's soul is his own, we say—and we should mean this of man, female or male, youth or patriarch. Only so meaning can we be democrats in the one true and worthy sense—which is not that sense which would reduce all men to a level of likeness, like the eggs in an incubator, but that sense which would have an ever-living faith in the possibilities of human nature to discover human good.

But I must distinguish. I have been making my convictions as to the right of youth to live his own life, in freedom and respect, the core of my letter. All along I have had a covert fear lest my reader should be confusing it with a pedagogic doctrine much in vogue nowadays for which I have only distrust. I refer to the extension of the biological phenomena of recapitulation, extended beyond embryology into a theory of conscious life. The development of the human embryo does indeed recapitulate, as it were formally, certain striking features of animal evolution. But to apply the principle of this development to the whole conscious life of man, and in particular to the growth of mind from childhood through youth is overpowering absurdity. As ordinarily so expanded the theory takes the form of a conception of serially emerging instincts, each coming to a sudden and dangerous florescence, and each, upon its appearance, to be indulged and condoned and doctored until the stage of danger has been passed. In other words, the youth's instincts and aptitudes are looked upon about as are measles and mumps and other "children's diseases," as best met by exposure at the proper age and an immunizing recovery. In practice the whole notion resolves into a theory of special license. Youth is to be given a permit to sow various crops of wild oats, with the idea that a properly indulged experience of savagery and whatnot will bring an eventual absolution from con-

tamination. I put the matter strongly because I have no call to dwell upon it; excepting to say that the older type of educational theory, which insisted that duty begins with even childish understandings, is far healthier and saner and everlastingly truer to human nature. My own theory, that the child is a citizen, is akin to the older theory; for citizenship always implies duties. It involves rights, too, and I would yield to none in conceding to the youngster what rightfully belongs to his years. But the intelligent granting of such rights can never be based upon a notion of license, such as the recapitulation theory has introduced into modern educational ideas. True citizenship rests upon the recognition of "fair play," and children themselves are ever showing us how vivid the idea of fair play is with them. This is their certificate of humanity, and gives the lasting lie to the notion that they must live through a progressive animality in order to become men.

But I have yet to make one important point. Children and youths have a right to live their own lives in their own way, subject (as all of us are subject) to the general restriction of good citizenship. With this right go duties, and I should say that of them all the youngster's first duty is the duty of happiness. I do not mean by this that he should be selfishly indulgent; I do not mean that his own way should be the only way for him; nor do I mean that the pleasant and pleasures should be his ideal. But I do mean that in the social gift, the gift to the life of

the state and to the morale of the community, which the life of youth brings, the element of greatest immediate value is the cheery-mindedness of youth. There is naught more beautiful in the world than the brightness of childhood, at play upon the green, lost in imaginings, musical in spontaneous gaiety. So also with youth's elder years; all the world loves a lover, not because he is a lover, but because he is young; and the years of youth are the years of many charming loves, for the mind's emprize and the soul's courage as well as for the charms of body and the graces of expression which make so great a part of our world's illumination. Let us not ask that youth express itself as age expresses itself, nor that it be judged by the standards of sober years; for there would be but a drab life to be lived if the color and freshness of upspringing fancy were rooted out. Doubtless youth's joyousness possesses for us no tangible economic value; on the other hand, its freedom of privilege is a part of our material work to provide; but is there, in all that we do materially, a single endeavor which brings to life as a whole so much of unalloyed good as does the sunny beauty of the life of youth?

## LETTER XII

### POETRY AND PAGEANTRY

IN my second letter, I think it was, I defined the gifts of a liberal education to be love of truth and of virtue and of beauty. If I did not remark in that connection it is perhaps occasion to do so now that these three loves are the essentially educable interests of man's nature. They are by no means the only human appetites and instincts; we possess many others, most or all of which we share with the balance of animal creation, and most of which, like the instincts of the animals, come to their due and seasonal expression unurged and untrained. For the discovery of such instinctive desires—ours and all creation's—we need no schooling; although for the control and direction of their proper expression nothing is more important than the power of judgment and will which schooling should give. And it can give this control primarily through its education, through its bringing out in true Socratic wise, of those other and rarer loves, of truth and virtue and beauty, with which man is so strangely and fortunately endowed. Self-control—to fall back to the old phrase—is not only the highest quality of the liberal man, but it is his essential quality and the very

one which makes him deserve the name of freeman; and it is self-control which is created by the right schooling of the educable desires.

Now I have spoken in those previous letters which dealt with the curriculum of the means for bringing the love of truth into the conscious life. All that part of education which has to do with the imparting of the tools of knowledge and with the acquisition of knowledge itself, if it be in the hands of a wise and truth-loving teacher, will be answered, in the pupil's soul, by a spontaneous and inevitable treasuring of all that is honest and genuine and true; nature has seen to this, human nature, in giving man, out of whatever Eden constituted his first innocency, an insatiable taste for the fruit of the tree of knowledge.

Further, and in many ways, the love of virtue comes with the school's direction of life. This is, indeed, the one meaning which can be attached to the word "discipline" that is a proper value. Heaven forefend that any should mistake my meaning here! For by discipline I do not at all mean the regimentation of youthful lives, with all the varied paraphernalia of red-tape regulation and unintelligent suppression and punishment; that is merely fantastic and monstrous, and it imprisons rather than frees human souls. But by discipline I mean the imparting of that conception of duty and desire of action which will lead a mortal to put himself through the test of effort, that he himself

may conquer the obstacles which he has been taught to see for himself, and attain ends equally self-foreseen and self-commanded. Discipline means putting child or man on his mettle, in situations where mettle is needed—and it is for this reason that school represents and should rightfully represent hard work. That schoolroom which is all ease and delight to its occupants, which never wears nor wearies, is surely failing of a portion of its mission—the training of the ability to stand up under punishment which no man can safely dispense with.

But it is not of devotion to truth nor fidelity to virtue that I purpose to write this letter. I have mentioned these rather to indicate that their cultivation in the school has methods of its own, which are not, as it happens, the methods which educate the third great love of the human spirit, the love of beauty. There is a certain measure of the stern and the repressive where truth and virtue are the stake, without which the stake is lost. Truth is a kind of alignment amidst the deviousness of error, which it is always a toil to follow—even if the toil be an exalted one. Virtue is built upon inhibition, upon the suppression of the waywardness and lassitudes everlastingly besetting mind and body, and the way of virtue, too, is a way of effort. One has to be tremendously alive to keep one's moral balance and tremendously alert to keep one's rational balance,—and it is perhaps this that leads us to speak of the "uprightness" of virtuous living and of the

"steadiness" of sound thinking. But by a kindly compensation, the third and perhaps final love of them all, the love of beauty, is simple and easy and spontaneous; and needs, on the part of the teacher, only the soft magic of suggestion in order that it may come smilingly into flower.

"Poetry springs from two instincts lying deep in our nature, the instinct for rhythm and the instinct for imitation." If Aristotle had pointed to no truth save this, he would still deserve his place as greatest of all the critics of art. The instinct for rhythm is the expressive instinct and at the same time the form-giving instinct; it reflects in its forms the very subtlest truth of physiology, the laws of life itself, as they are manifested in pulse and breathing and indeed in that whole wonderful organic economy which makes of a living creature not a substance nor a chemical compound, but a form of motion and an equilibration of forces. Why, for example, should the young not dance when the whole of their supple bodies, like the foliage of a tree swaying in a summer breeze, is a complex of varied and rhythmic motion? And why should not their voices echo in pulsating song when they themselves, body and mind, are like Aeolian instruments played upon by the free airs of heaven? Singing and dancing and flashing eyes are the very image of the fullness of life and of that high animation which out of a handful of sunkist dust and a few brief years creates the form of man. Wherefore, let no teacher who hon-

ors what is fairest in humankind and no school which would truly free human nature fail to give opportunity, and indeed the cry of speed to all who in motion and song will at once praise and realize life's beauty.

As the instinct for rhythm is the expressive instinct, so the instinct for imitation or mimicry is the receptive and appreciative one. All the world is full of colors and forms and sounds and motions in themselves tantalizing to the shaping fancy and challenging to the imagination. The smallest nub of humanity in the crib hardly makes the discovery of his fingers before he begins to grasp and arrange to his own sweet will whatever is graspable and arrangeable within reach; and each child creeping to the window seat is a new aspirant after the moon. It is the most natural of continuations that the youth, with each new craft made familiarly his own—the craft of song, of colors, of words,—should weave fanciful snares for all the intangibles by which his faculties are surrounded; and it is out of this that are born the passions for painting and poetry and acting out dramatically the passions of others which make of your youngster an inevitable even if unskilled artist. The world is for him a veritable palace of suggestion, with a spell for the opening of each magic portal, half the mystery of which consists in its independent finding. One might indeed say that the passion for expression and for rhythmic form finds its full complement in

the gorgeously varied suggestiveness of all that the eye sees and the mind construes; the union of the two, sense and motion, rhythm and imitation, is the thing we call art.

Partly what I wish to indicate is that art is not a thing apart from life, but that it is a part of life, and most of all a part of the young and growing life of the school child. There used to be the notion that music and painting and polite letters were all in the nature of "accomplishments," suitable for young ladies with matrimonial aspirations and for young gentlemen of drawing-room habits. Now neither the aspiration nor the habits are incompatible with a cultivated sense of beauty, and undoubtedly there is this truth in the old view, that the cultivated appreciation enhances social qualities. But what is important for teachers to understand, and for the world with them, is the fact that the love of beauty and its expression in art is something that is deep and instinctive and humanly indispensable in man's nature; and again that (this being true) it is part of the school's task to summon forth the love and to indicate the means of expression.

And what are these means, as the schools and teachers possess them? I should answer, poetry and pageantry. And in this answer I should mean by poetry, not merely formal verse, but, in the Greek sense, the whole art of aesthetic creation; the poet is literally a "maker," and poetry, therefore, should represent the inventive or expressive side of

the love of beauty, leading to manifestation in all forms of music and acting and imaginative recounting, and the whole round of artistic forms. By pageantry, again, I should mean what the word first stands for, and that is the aesthetic structure, the scene, which is given by nature and by the world and by all the great abode of the human mind, historical and cosmical. The universe is the vastest and most magnificent of all pageants, wherein, as Longinus says, we are entered, to be not only spectators of her contests, but ourselves most ardent competitors and ourselves candidates for the prize — those crowns of laurel which are the poet's one reward. I am but repeating in more ranging terms the complementation of rhythm and imitation, which now should be seen to be not only instincts deep in our nature, but veritable laws of life and of the whole universe within which we dwell.

Quite literally, too, poetry and pageantry are the natural modes of the school's expression of its understanding of beauty. Poetry in its literary forms comes naturally as a theme for study, and again it should come in the library, through a liberal supply of the great poetic books. It comes likewise in song and in the forms of music, for never has poetry been merely a literary form, but always also a musical form. Music and singing, as everyone knows, belong by right to school years and to all years. Pageantry, also, comes in a variety of forms. For I suppose that it is clear that the use of a pencil and

paint, form and color, is an art of pageantry —the great art of reproducing and preserving the scenic loveliness and the picturesque fantasies which enrich our understanding of nature and history and indeed of the panoramic environment of everyday life. Further it is pageantry which plays perhaps the first part in the dramatic and festival features of the school; for it is the spectacle that is the key to our love of stage and masque, and gives to splendid mummeries an undying fascination. Youth is ever on the alert for these things, ready, with every zest, to bring them to realization whenever the chance is given. All that is needed is the suggestion,—a magic wand which should be in every teacher's hand.

I do not think I need undertake practical hints; the whole matter of art and pageantry is nowadays a recognized feature of school organization. But I should like to indicate what seems to me a peril of the practice,—and this, again, is the peril of regimentation. I believe in instruction in the technique of the arts—this of course; and I know that expertness in them comes only from work. Nevertheless, I am not convinced that training in art ought to stand in the curriculum on the same footing as other branches. It ought to stand as a special opportunity, rather than as a requirement, to be pursued spontaneously and out of love of it. For this reason I should make it extra-curricular, and give opportunity for its cultivation in irregular hours, and

whenever the interest is keen. I believe that proficiency in the expression of beauty, like the understanding and desire of beauty, comes less by routine than by intense devotion; and that the moments of intensity must be seized upon. Of course I also believe in offering every encouragement which resources permit for the development of taste and the manifestation of artistic powers. It is mainly for this reason that—as I said once before—had I the making of the calendar, it would be full of red-letter days, days of festival in which the children and youths should be the fête-makers, the artists. For this same reason (as also for its value in giving an understanding love of home and country), I should encourage the pageant based upon national history or local life, in which the nobility of American character or the beauties of our native traditions should be brought home to young and old alike. For, after all, it is not merely the young that partake of the richness of life in giving expression to whatever is lovely, it is also their elders, in whom the imagination is a bit staled by care and disappointment, who are to be won back into the first and freshest of inspirations, the love of beauty, which is also surely the last and divinest of inspirations.

## LETTER XIII

### THE AGE OF ROMANCE

THE grace, imagination, and generosities of childhood and youth form such a treasure, in the whole economy of human life, as deserves not only the sympathy of those who have passed the golden age, but their most ardent appreciation—for it is from the sun of youth, shedding its changing but endless glories upon the days of mankind, that the workaday and sunset years derive their own most precious illumination. I am here returning to a former theme—the enrichment of life which the presence of youth gives to all—for I am convinced that it is from this point of view alone that the schools, as the especial provision which society makes for its youth, will be accorded their true dignity as institutions of the state. And of all the problems which beset the teacher, none, I conceive, is more difficult, nor should be the cause of more self-searching criticism, than is that which has to do with the teacher's attitude toward those enthusiasms for things of the imagination which the practical years of maturity look back upon as dreaming, but which, in the order of nature, are God-given to youth.

There is, in all human handiwork, whether it be wrought in the fragile form of the arts or in the brick and iron and brown earth of the industries, a character of phantasmagoria. To the worker, of the middle years of life, the product of his toil looks hard, matter-of-fact and seems building for the ages. But to the old man, whose hands rest after his years of labor, and to the young, whose mind is vivid with the lines and colors of what is yet to be builded, the material world is all of the stuff of dreams, and man's most stable cities are but as lodges erected for their passing season, as camps set up for the night. And it is more for this than for any other reason that these two, the young and the old, are drawn to a common understanding. They live in a visionary universe, wherein man's part is to adventure, to discover, to snare the evanescent charms, and as best he may to make a brave show of his captures against that swift-come day when all shall be wiped clean, and the earth renewed for a new race; for it is not what man leaves, but what he lives that makes life's wealth.

The young and the old see this, one by a morning, the other by an evening sun; but we of the middle years are ready at forgetting it, absorbed as we are in what we a bit pompously call the "world's work." Yet teachers, at least, cannot afford such a forgetting. Theirs it is to be the guides and gatekeepers betwixt youth and maturity—theirs, therefore, to understand the ambitions and impulses of

both periods of life. They must forewarn the young without disillusioning them, for there are few spiritual disasters so fell in consequence as is the thing we name disillusionment,—and naming, misname, since (as old age knows) the most fatal of illusions is to be bereft of hopeful imaginings. They must also recall to the mature the meaning of fancy in life's economy, keeping alive the creative flame which is all too easily snuffed by the routine of toil. In brief, the teacher must comprehend the age of romance not only for the sake of those young folk in his charge who are living out its hey-dey, but also for the sake of all folk—lest it be forgotten by men that all that is kingly in human achievement gets its crowning glories from romantic fires, and that of all man-built habitations the most wonderful are castles in Spain.

It is for the sake of their romance that I believe in keeping the fairy tales and the Halloween customs and the Santa Claus myth bright with their native fantasy. Take Holloween for example. How many realize out of what antiquity this festival comes to us? For it is assuredly older than recorded history or than the art of writing—probably by many millenia. Whenever, in October, I pass down the street and see in the shop windows their decorations—witches and black cats, jack-o'-lanterns and sheaves of corn—I go back in thought to the great autumn harvest and all souls' festivals which our ancestors celebrated in the old world, cen-

turies before Caesar, centuries before King Cheops and his pyramid. Already in the village communities of that olden time there was the great feast of the "harvest homing," when sheaves of corn were brought in, the last sheaf tied like a doll, to be the "spirit of the corn" during the winter months. The youths and maidens danced and sang, while as Homer describes it, "a lad with delicate voice thrummed the clear-toned viol and led the choric chant in praise of Linos." Afterwards, there were bon-fires (at least in the Celtic north), and the bobbing of apples, and the telling of fortunes, and maids gazed into mirroring waters to see the images of them they are to marry. At night food was set out, for the souls of the dead returned then to share in the feast, and thus it was the feast of "all souls," of the living and of the dead. Doubtless this is the oldest of our festivals, and the games and divinings that go with it the oldest that we still follow, out of the immemorial past; and when the children are out, as Halloween mummers, and the boys and girls with their games and parties, for myself I am grateful that they keep, unconsciously, this bit of romance vital and fresh; it is to me a symbol of man's true heritage, that life of the spirit which outlives all his material monuments.

Christmas which falls just after the change of the year at the winter solstice, and Easter which is near the spring equinox and in the season of returning life, are two great religious festivals which, by

some subtlety of providence, fall also at the time of very ancient solar feasts: for both were holy to our pagan ancestors before the Christian era. Perhaps it is alike providential that our national birthday, the Fourth of July, should fall so hard upon the summer solstice, celebrated with bale-fires and Druidic rites many centuries ago. At all events our four chief festivals, Easter, the Fourth, Halloween, and Christmas, have a double significance; being not only what directly we observe them for, but also memorials of the antiquity of our race, which, already in the dawn of time, was celebrating with the seasons the vernal birth of life, its summer maturity, its autumn homing, and its winter quiescence. Surely, there are few things that are essential to human nature and existence that are not betokened by these old fêtes, all still dear to the hearts of children.

Doubtless it is an easy task for the schools to keep such celebrations healthy and living, to broaden and heighten the manner of their observance, and to interpret them afresh to each generation of youngsters. This festal life of the year is the beginning of the romantic interpretation of all life, in the keeping up of venerable and picturesque traditions as well as in the deeper meanings which attach to religious and patriotic sentiments. It may also form the beginning of a lively interest in astronomy, through association with the solar changes which mark our seasons and show how intimately human

fate and welfare is dependent upon the circling heavens—whose courses, Plato tells us, are the bright and true image of the courses of intelligence in our own souls.

A more difficult task—pertaining still to the age of romance—is that which has to do with other and even more fundamental human dispositions. For the young venerate the past less than they live in the present and look to the future: they are the great plotters of mankind, and their minds are full of forethought. It is this that makes of them heroes and adventurers and knights errant, eager to explore all lands and confident in the undertaking of all deeds. The proper direction of this spirit of adventure, which is the very heart of romance, is as important as any part of the task which falls to the teacher; and it should be, in method, as remote as any from school-room regimentation. For it is here that the quality of chivalry, which is the great virtue of the romantic age, must be awakened and cultivated, and this can never be by command but only by volunteering. The courage and loyalty and generous helpfulness which are the prime traits of chivalry come naturally to youth, once they are ideally shown; but in order that they may be made living they must have opportunity for exercise—for with all his imagination, your boy in the 'teens is a hardy realist, demanding space within which to move and effortful deeds to be done in the world about him. Hence, there must be action in his life,

to make it real, and chivalric action to make real his chivalric ideals. And of all our recent educational innovations none seems to me so promising as the institution of the boy scouts and the camp-fire girls. For here is supplied in just the right mode that combination of free opportunity and unconstraining instruction which will bring to its natural flower the knightliness which is in the soul of every youth, awaiting only its self-discovery. Assuredly no school system is complete without, not only the liberal opportunity for these movements, but also the positive provision for them and encouragement of them. Soon (and it cannot be too soon) there will be no American community in which scout and camp-fire will not seem as essential as the schools themselves; nor any school whose spirit and method will not be greatly and profitably modified by their presence. Their introduction will be in a community which has known them not, like the throwing wide of the windows to sunlight and free air.

The spirit of chivalry, on its adventurous side, wherein it calls for courage and self-sacrifice, is understood already in childhood, and may guide action already in childhood. Nor can there be any other preparation of more value for that other phase of chivalric romance which becomes the ardent impulse of elder youth. It is often and truly said that "romantic love"—meaning thereby that love whose heart is all loyalty and devotion—came into the world with mediæval chivalry, that it was unknown

to the pagans both of the ancient Mediterranean and the ancient Baltic, and existed only when Christianity had raised woman to a position of dignity and all men to a sense of spiritual companionship. Nor can youth which has been reared in the chivalric tradition, itself a thing too precious to lose, ever fail of a nobler and truer sense of the duties of lovers as well as of the lastingness of true love's troth, when this shall become the great adventure of life. The institution of marriage, as all men know, is at the foundation of the state; and in the control and interpretation of this institution, too, the schools, whether willingly or not, must play their leading rôle. It is in the school room that youth and maid first meet on a social plane, and in the school that perhaps most of the marriage unions get their first impulse. To this there can surely be no feeling of objection; for to a student of the institutions of mankind, among the various races of men, no fact can be more obvious than that of all modes of match-making humanly devised (and they are many), none is comparable with the free association of the young of the two sexes, intimate without being either prudish or familiar, in the public schools of democratic states.

Of course, with such a responsibility theirs, the schools are more than ever bound to the cultivation —early and late and assiduous—of all ideals that ennoble human relations, most of all, therefore, to the cultivation of those ideals of chivalry which are

the grace and illumination of romantic love. It must be, then, the teacher's solicitude that each boy shall be in his own conscience "chevalier without fear and without stain," and that each maid shall read in her mirror the love of an inner as well as the quest of an outer beauty. The age of aristocracy is gone by; ours is an age of democracy: but the spirit of chivalry is a thing too precious for mankind to lose, and the schools must be its preservers.

## LETTER XIV

### THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

IN the letters which hitherto I have written I have been concerned with the work which the schools have to do, the education which it should be theirs to impart, and the great task which is set for them in the realization of public welfare. The schools exist for the sake of the common weal of the commonwealth, for the bettering of men's lives, and should be constantly adapted and adapting themselves to this great purpose. Of this, as fundamental, we who are teachers must never allow ourselves to lose sight: otherwise we fail in our profession.

And there is an especial and insidious danger of becoming blinded to the great end of education to which teachers more than others are liable. This is the institutionalized aspect of the public school, most in danger of misleading its own officials, who are the teachers. Like every other great public institution, the public schools tend toward bureaucratic organization, and hence towards a system which constantly threatens (for this is the nature of bureaucracy) to forget or lose its purpose in the effort to preserve its outward forms. Schools — grade, grammar,

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high, college,—interlocking and superposed like a vast and complex edifice, inevitably stress and strain their many members into rigid and mechanical structures; only the most alert intelligence can keep this edifice from defeating its inner design, which is, and must ever be, the cultivation of mind and character. Hence it is that teachers, and all other school officials, must be always on their guard against the evils of ungiving systematization in the institution itself—the outer and evil counterpart of that bureaucracy of mind which we call pedantry. Let us, above all, be not pedants of the "school system!"

I say this by way of caution, for there is no disposition to evil to which teachers are so peculiarly liable as in the disposition to become slaves to their "system." Routine is always easier than invention, and in schools, where some routine is imperative, the unslacking temptation is for the teacher to jog on in a deep-rutted habit. Of course (to save our dignities) we like to call the habit-making process "administrative work"—but this is self-camouflage; most of what goes as school administration, from the university down, is nothing more than clerk's slavery; it all goes in the direction of regulation, and that means straight toward the tomb of what is vital and promising in the great task of bringing forth conscious life. There is an anecdote (which I trust is not true) of a certain superintendent of schools to the effect that he boasted that if given

the grade to which a child in his schools belonged he could tell at any hour of the school day what pages of what book were open before it. This seems to me horrible and monstrous. It is the goose-step of the mental drill, and in its consequence can only be even more ruinous than is its military model. I cannot believe this tale to be true, but its mere currency in the community shows the existence of the ideal. Men flatter themselves by calling it educational "efficiency," whereas it is in truth neither educational nor efficient, but only the dismal clanking of fetters. Teachers know (how many of them have not cried out against it) that they are ever repeatedly being hobbled in coils of red tape—official in many cases, but also often self-imposed,—magnified under the name of system; but teachers know also that a slothful yielding to this is, for weak mortals, vastly easier than the preservation of that true energy of instruction which comes only from the life of ideas. In the last resort as in the first, the work of teaching is a work of the mind bent upon discovery.

System in public schools is necessary (this goes without saying), but there is nothing sacrosanct about its forms (and this needs saying). For example, there is a reflection of nature in the hierarchy of our school "grades,"—primary, intermediate, grammar, high, college, graduate—formidable enough when set out in order! And the nature which is reflected is the nature of the growing minds and

bodies of children; that is the fact which gives its whole meaning to such a system. The grades are, so to speak, coefficients or functions of these minds and bodies, varied by rather than varying the natural development of intelligence and desire. If I may change my figure, the school system should be conceived, not as a mold into which plastic human material is to be poured and rigidly cast, but as like the many-chambered shell of the nautilus, of which each apartment is the creation of the growing life of the voyager, captain of the craft.

Probably the very worst feature of our systematizing tendency is the reduction of educational "standards" to a kind of deadly arithmetic. What I refer to is the use of percentage gradings as tests of advancement, the equation of subjects in the form of number-hour courses and credits, and the giving of diplomas and certificates on the basis of purely numerical records. Certainly I understand that something of this is necessary; but, at all events in the higher grades, the method has reached the level of the grotesque. University students go about seeking "credit hours," when they should be interested in learning; they forget that what is of value to them must be an education, and they rush pell-mell after the degree. Too rapidly this same method (with its ruin of ideals) is pressing downward; already it has seized upon the high school, and, if my information is not at fault, is even now invading the grades. Clearly arithmetization is a

menace, and the sooner teachers set themselves against its encroachments the safer will be the future of real learning and the truer the fundamental patriotism of the schools. Americans rightly proclaim as a national characteristic the spirit of individual independence and individual initiative—the power of a man to look out for himself; but assuredly there is no better method for destroying this spirit and its powers than an educational system deprived of inner life and reduced to an outer numbering. When the final meaning of going to school is a mathematical computation, plus a badge, who will prize its gifts or what state will profit by them?

Along with the evil of exaggerated numberings goes servility to texts and methods. Both of these evils—the text-book and the method—grow with the size and solidity of the school organization. Again I would say that I do not wish to refuse merit or necessity to that from which the evil use is prone to come; I should not reject text-books nor do away with methods of teaching. These things are not themselves bad. What is bad about them is their misuse, and that comes by way of imperatives and regulations. Take the text-book. In some states there is by law state-wide use of the same book or series of books in all the schools of the state—an intolerable opportunity for graft, as well as a denial of all rights of independent judgment on the part of the teacher. It stands to reason—and it is the fact,—that the utility of a text-book varies with

the person who uses it, and that for persons of differing powers differing books are often to be preferred. The real guard against misuse of such means is the teacher who can teach without any text-book, and who never regards the book in any other light than as a secondary help in the task of teaching. Indeed, of what consequence is the teacher if he have not the gift of imparting knowledge from his own possession of it? Which must also be by his own best self-discovered methods. I remember, twenty years ago, how students in teachers' colleges used to be canting the phrase "apperception mass" (brought with not a few other pedagogic evils out of Germany), thinking that it was a kind of open sesame to a mode of teaching without labor and of learning without consciousness. Today, "socialization," "motivization," and I know not what other polysyllables, are twisted off the pedagogic tongue with the same old facility. As a matter of fact, most of this is just showy jargon. All such methods resolve in plain English to the one and only true method of teaching, and that is to find an interested teacher able to interest a pupil: interest means willing work, work means understanding, and understanding means the advancement of that learning which is precious in life. An honest school official, discovering an honest teacher, will drop pedantic apparatus and, with easy conscience, bid him go to his task—the true way of which it is for the teacher to find.

But I have still a third bone to pick with the system-makers, and this is their substitution of the "accrediting" for the "examination" method of advancing students. This grew not unnaturally out of the point-credit system; for where the subjects studied vary in many directions, it is obviously difficult to agree upon the matter of examinations, while it is relatively easy to make clerical computations of number-records. But because it was easy of growth is no reason why the method is beneficial in operation; and in my opinion it is distinctly the reverse.

It is not that I wish to hold an unqualified brief for the examination. For a teacher whose pupils are constantly under eye, with day to day contact, they need not be necessary. Of course, where the classes are very large, examinations cannot be dispensed with, and probably even for the small class there is a certain invigorating bracing-up as a result of the test. But it is not of examinations within the class room that I am thinking; these are a feature of method, and should be the teacher's own affair. Very different is the case with "entrance examinations." In passing from one school or from one teacher to another, the surest mode of getting acquainted is the examination which shows both parties—teacher and pupil—what is to be expected of one another. No one with long experience in teaching can doubt that time and effort are both constantly thrown to the winds as a result of the

wrong placing of students, growing out of the accrediting method. This is naturally most an evil in the university, and in particular in the relation of the university to the "accredited" high schools. Instead of bringing these schools into touch with the university the accrediting system puts them out of touch with what is real and vigorous in college ideals—and that is the body of learning which the college aims to impart and which the entrance examination served (even if feebly) to define.

I do not mean to say that examinations (in many ways crude devices) are panaceas for the ills which beset system. But they do have this merit: that they focus attention upon matter and not upon manner, upon inner attainment and not upon outer credits—they stand for the same kind of difference as that between character and reputation. And in doing this they point the way to the kind of medicine or sanitation which should immunize the school system from its own dangers and lead to the preservation of educational health. This is the constant interchange of ideas and points of view as between teachers, among themselves, and between teachers and pupils through variety of relation. It is again the old problem of securing human contact, individual with individual, mind with mind, as the real foundation of the birth and life of the humane spirit. As to how this can be brought about, I can at least make a suggestion.

My suggestion is of this nature. Among col-

leges there is rapidly growing in favor what is called the exchange professorship. This means that for a term or a year a teacher changes places with a colleague in some other institution. Each of the exchanging professors meets new professional associates and a new style of student, while the students are given the benefit of a fresh point of view in the familiar subject. Such exchanges are made not merely as between the institutions of our several states, but, between teachers from foreign countries—Frenchmen, Spaniards, Japanese, lecturing in the United States and American professors lecturing in the schools of these countries. Such a system has its counterpart in the rotation of teachers in the grades, in teaching by substitute teachers, and from another angle in the lesser permanency with which secondary school teachers are employed, all good in so far as these produce variety of personal contact. Professional impermanency is not in itself good, of course; but is there any reason why the university method of exchange teaching should not be carried down into the schools below, once the teacher comes to his own in his career?

Possibly a simpler step toward the same sound end would be the adoption of the English plan of "visiting examiners," according to which examinations that mark important transitions in the school course (what we call graduations) are given by teachers brought from neighboring schools for the

purpose. Inevitably a teacher who knows that those whom he is training are to be tried out by a colleague having different methods of teaching feels a certain healthy toning up of his own work; he is kept upon his mettle, and thinks of his teaching not in terms of the judgment rendered by students knowing nothing of his subject except what he gives, but in terms of the mature judgment of a fellow teacher. Certainly such a plan would be of vast benefit to our universities, and if carried down into high school grades it would eventually outvalue every device of official inspection.

The reason is simple. Teaching is a personal art, not a matter of apparatus, method, system, machinery. It thrives where the teachers have living responsibilities and are aware of their responsibilities, alike to their pupils and to the great inheritance of human civilization, which it is theirs to guard through its untarnished transmission to posterity.

## LETTER XV

### THE TEACHER'S PROFESSION

TEACHING is one of the oldest of the professions. It has a record of eminence in the names of those who have followed it—philosophers, scholars, scientists, men of affairs—second to no other calling. It has a present and future importance for society, in the preservation and development of the state, second to none. It demands in aptitude and in the generous quality of human wisdom a high endowment, and in preparation (at the standard) an arduous and exacting training. With such a history and position, the profession of teaching should be one of the most honorable of professional employments. It is, judged by common repute, one of the least honorable. As all men know, the teacher (college professor or district schoolmistress) is everywhere regarded as a legitimate subject of a kind of public patronizing—as if teachers were necessarily marked by a certain childishness of mind, because of their preoccupation with the young. Such a point of view must have its causes, which are certainly of importance for those who are in the profession to understand—not merely with a view to bettering their own repu-

tation, but with a view to overcoming whatever defects in the character of their profession may justify the reputation.

For, frankly, teachers everywhere know that there is some justification for the public attitude—understanding by "justification" an honest and intelligent human motive. This begins and ends in the fact that the attitude is in so considerable a measure shared by teachers themselves. The public but takes them at their own self-appraisement. There is no human trait quite so impossible to conceal as is one's estimate of oneself; your conceited man proclaims his quality as upon a placard, and the broken in spirit is never to be mistaken. It is, too, the most natural thing in the world (ask for a job and you will discover it) to judge another at his own valuation, which means that it is at least well to have such good conceit as knowledge of one's powers warrants. And this is just what the teaching profession lacks; it is humble and spiritless in its own self-esteem, and is taken in a like mode by the public. The first great reform needed among teachers is conviction of the importance and pride in the accomplishment of their work.

Of course there are objective reasons for this subjective defect. Everybody is familiar with them; educational discussions always return to them. I refer to the forms of preparation for and the manner of recruiting the profession; to the questions of salary, pension, tenure; to the problem

of "feminization," which is serious primarily because it tends to make teaching a temporary chore rather than a life work; to the diffuse organization and lack of professional spirit of teachers, as compared with men in other employments. Each of these factors is in the nature of a real social problem, and each tends to weaken the power and deteriorate the work of teaching, while all of them together are contributory to the one great fundamental defect—the weak professional self-respect of teachers. Once this is reformed, the public standing of school employes will right itself.

But undoubtedly the reform of spirit must follow upon some program for the solution of the besetting problems. I do not think it necessary that the solutions be fully reached in order that the profession be born into a new and healthier consciousness; there need be but their clear formulation (perhaps in the shape of a platform, such as politicians employ); this, of itself, would tend to create spirit. And it is of the possibility of such a teachers' platform, conceived in the broadest way, that I would speak.

Its prime article should surely be a clear expression of the teacher's conception of the meaning of education in society. There should be a statement of the place of liberal training in the whole educational life of the state; of the place and justification of vocational training, and especially of its relationship to the great labor problems that are shaking

the world; of the relation and meaning of "secondary" and "higher" education, and of the modes in which a democratical government should select candidates for the latter. On these matters I have already expressed or implied my own views; but I believe that a formal enouncement, say from Nebraska teachers as a body, and from American teachers as a body, and again from the teaching profession of all the allied democracies, represented in a great congress—that such an enouncement would be of the greatest weight in the public mind and of the highest significance to teachers themselves. We all believe that the world is on the eve of a vital reconstruction, affecting the whole ideal of life; and we should realize that this reconstruction makes not only an unexampled demand upon the teachers of men, but that it offers the teaching profession such an opportunity for habilitation as it has never yet seen. In the generation that is to create the new life the teachers should be leaders.

But first we must clear away the dust of the past. And I should follow, in my platform, the enouncement of principles by specific "planks" dealing with the venerable ills which beset us. Among these (to take the problems in the order in which I cited them above), there would be first a plank calling for a state-wide consideration of the qualifications to be demanded of teachers and of the modes of their certification already in the statute books, for it is surely time that the whole matter be overhauled.

There is red tape to be raveled out, and common sense to be injected in, and a kind of general rule to be held before all eyes to the effect that if it be not strictly true that "teachers are born and not made," it is at least true that they must be born with proper endowment before they can be made with proper finish.

The questions of salary, tenure, pay, are intimately related to the others—indeed, are rather dependent upon other reforms than determinants of them. Mere salary or wage increases are of little moment unless they be accompanied by such a toning-up of professional standards and such a growth of professional spirit as will justify them. Financial returns are, after all, in a broad way reflective of social valuations; teachers must raise the valuation first. However, for the plank's sake, there should be an effort to name a fair scale, in all the branches of the teaching service.

The problem of feminization is really only a special phase of the problem of temporary tenure, which is, I suspect, more than any other one thing at the root of the discomforts that professionally beset teachers. For out of this temporary tenure grow a number of evils. There is, first, the fact that the teacher is not an organic member of the community which he serves. He is a passing citizen, a missionary at best, a tramp at worst. This is the height of absurdity, for there is no profession where the demand for a long and intimate service

is more real. We look upon the "family physician" as an institution; for the reason that the good doctor must know not only the symptoms of disease, but the habits of health and the bodily constitutions of his patients. How much more should this be the case with the physician of the mind—slowest of all human functions in developing and hardest of all to measure and diagnose? Moreover, if the teacher be in the community what ideally he should be, a leader in its whole intellectual life, he can become this only through a long familiarity with it and with its needs, and that means only through becoming a part of it. The ideal schoolmaster is the man who knows the youth from infancy upward, who knows the parents, who knows the nature and impulses which in each community give individuality and color to the local society. Such a man or woman must pass a lifetime with a school. Another defect of passing tenure is that it tends to over-emphasize the superintendence, the system side, of school conduct. When teachers become differentiated into groups, the one composed entirely of the long-tried and the other of the temporary "job holders," it becomes impossible to avoid bureaucracy; the first-named group will inevitably control and prescribe for the second, taking away the whole spirit of independence and all incentive to invention—in other words, rooting "Americanism" from out the craft. This, it can be imagined, is but a poor preparation for the preservation of our national spirit.

Now to deal with these evils, I should favor a plank, or series of them, something in this order. First, a formal organization of teachers, not in loose associations, but in self-discriminating societies, having requirements and grades; as, for example, there should be at least a grade of master teachers and a grade of apprentice teachers, with differing professional privileges attaching to each one. The idea would be to distinguish those who are making a life work of teaching from those who undertake it experimentally; for surely it is the former who should set the standard of the profession. Second —feminism again—there should be a plank encouraging the employment of married women, not as against those who are professional, but as against those who are obviously but candidates for marriage (in itself a legitimate and respectable social condition, but not conducive to the advancement of teaching). Third, there should be a call for the more public recognition of the teacher in the community which he serves, both through a legal improvement of his position (school-board fiat is not necessarily the best or sole ground for employment; there might be a county superintendent's ratification or veto of local action, with a possible referendum to the community); and again through local or state-fund salary guarantees as a reward for long service.

But all such planks and the whole of such a platform would have to do with external changes which

could be of little significance if unaccompanied by internal revelation. What it all comes to is this: the teacher must find in his work itself such an interest and such a field for achievement that he will be ever upon his mettle to realize its possibilities. There must be more independence and less superintendence; more invention and less convention; more imagination and less habit. The plank toward a division of teachers into masters and apprentices would look toward this; for at present the great body of teachers in the public schools are all treated as apprentices, and few, even of the long-experienced, are given master work to do. The plank leading toward permanency of tenure should look in the same direction. For if a person of imagination and trained observation, such as a teacher should be, were to be placed in any American community with a life work there in view, it would become not only his duty, but the fascination of a lifetime, to come to such an understanding of that community as should reveal in it an image of all human nature and of all the world. This is no passing fantasy. The monuments of English literature number many a work of poetry and fiction devoted to the interpretation of village communities, and there is not a township in our west but calls for its Gray or Austin or Hawthorne. Furthermore, if the interest be scientific, there is in every community material for social studies that should be not only of local, but of state and national value

We all know what missionaries have done in the way of "opening up" remote quarters of earth to the knowledge of mankind. The process of "opening up" is never completed while men continue to be born, and it should be a part of the teacher's expectation to be an interpreter of human nature in whatever community his task is set. Such an interest was that of Shakespeare, such that of George Eliot. And can any ask from life a more inspiring gift?

## LETTER XVI

### THE TEACHER'S LIFE

I WONDER if any of my readers shared with me the feeling of distaste for the term "teaching profession" with which I headed my last letter. I cannot quite explain the feeling—a combination of vague apology and vague resentment, both directed to no particular source, and yet firmly attaching to just this union of words; as if there were no truly professional character to teaching or as if to acknowledge oneself to be a teacher were somehow discreditable. The title of "professor," which goes with certain sorts of teaching, seems to share this same nameless opprobium—mild, but omnipresent; so that, when introduced by the title, one feels, as it were, a spinal invitation to cringe as half expecting to be met by a supercilious, "Ah, indeed!" Certainly we shall all be rejoiced when the practice of the teacher's art is relieved from such questionable honorifics, meantime wearing them with such grace as may be ours.

And yet (there is always an "and yet")—and yet teaching is a profession, as noble as the noblest. It has not, in its outward forms, the recognitions that attach to many other professions; it is notoriously

a field of disproportion of material returns for preparation and labor expended; it suffers from uncertainty of organization and indefiniteness of status. But in spite of all these defects it has attractions which keep the ranks filled with not incapable men and women, willing to devote to it the years of a lifetime. It owns, indeed, a certain inner and subtle fascination which is far easier to perceive than to define. And this, it appears to me, it is of the greatest importance for teachers themselves to understand. Accordingly, I propose to devote this, my last letter, to an effort to show wherein I conceive it to lie.

What first comes to mind as the true satisfaction of the teacher is the oft-spoken privilege of observing the growth of that most wonderful and various of growing things, the human mind. It is a great part of all human gratification to observe and influence change, and especially such changes as are intimately connected with human welfare. Thus, the farmer takes a solid satisfaction in the growing crop, quite apart from its market-price; the tradesman in the expansion of his business; the physician in his cures; the engineer in the success of a difficult project, pitting his wit against the forces of nature. Something of the same thing, but assuredly in increased measure because of the subtlety of the psychical forces with which he deals, comes to the teacher in watching and molding the development of the minds of the young. My dear colleague and

one-time teacher, Dr. Wolfe (born to the art if ever teacher was)[1] puts it: "I like to watch their eyes change,"—well knowing that the changing expression of the eyes is the most sensitive of all the expressional barometers of the mind.

Such an interest is, of course, profoundly personal at the core. It rests upon mutual confidence and friendship,—qualities upon whose significance we might devote much reflection; for the very foundation of all human welfare is ultimately confidence and friendship. The Greeks (whom all the world agrees in naming wise) devoted many a discourse to the praise of friendship, and told many a tale of Damon and Pythias. I suppose the most famous of all teachers and the greatest of all is Socrates; and you will remember that Socrates was friend first and teacher only through his friendships. You will remember, too (in the *Meno* there is an amusing description), how Socrates always turned from the elder and devoted himself to the younger men, as if more confident of youth and its promise. Which is just to the point. Boys and girls are not, as their elders are apt to be, ready concealers of their natures and dispositions; they have not yet put on a mask; rather, they are open and unsuspicious, and show their souls' depths quite unconsciously. Hence, it is that friendship comes easily to youth; and the teacher, perpetually dealing with youth, is granted the perpetual privilege of finding new

[1]Died July 30, 1918.

friendships, which for other men and women become more and more difficult as the years increase. What with their faculties, ideas, ambitions, aspirations ever changing into brighter and more variegated forms, and, with the intimacy of instruction, ever more generously shown, pupils naturally become comrades, and teachers are their natural friends. Thus the most precious of all treasures, a sense of mutual faith and of human fellowship, is made warm and vivid and in a special sense the teacher's privilege.

This, I say, is what is most often looked upon as the great reward of teaching. Frequently it is likened to the parent's reward in the rearing of children. That it is a genuine and precious addition to the teacher's life none can deny who have at all experienced it; nor need any one who has seen examples (as assuredly I have) doubt for a moment that with many teachers—those born, I should say, with a genius for friendship—it is an all-sufficient reward for the labor of teaching. But for all that, from certain points of view and to many teachers, especially of those who have become worn through long years of teaching, it is insufficient. For, after all, there is something perpetually one-sided in the friendship of teacher to pupil. The teacher is the unceasing giver, the pupil the unceasing recipient—a relation of a transitive rather than of a reciprocal type. I do not, of course, mean to say this of individuals (for there are abundant exceptions, truest

friendships originated in the class-room) ; but I do say it of the teacher as such and of the pupil as such. The former occupies a fixed position, the latter is a bird of passage; and in a certain true sense the teacher is in the situation of mine host of the tavern, who gives his whole life to serving transient guests. It is here that lies the fundamental difference between the parent's and teacher's relation to the child. The parent gives freely and devotedly through a term of years, but the time comes when the antique virtue of filial piety reverses the relationship and the child becomes the giver and caretaker and the perpetuator of the family name and honor. For the teacher there is no similar return; the giving is utterly altruistic, and that means (if it be not balanced by some other type of compensation) in the long run a spiritual impoverishment —for it must be well borne in mind, that love, to be fruitful, must be mutual. The teacher's affection for his charge is to parental love very much what platonic love is to true love. It is true, that in certain rare ways Plato's Uranian love gives rise to very fine and noble human relationships, but it is also true that the normal spiritual health of mankind lies not in this direction; the thing may be ridiculous. Observers have long and often noted "the tired, altruistic faces" of school teachers,— haloed, as it were, with the beauty of giving. But there is also a certain truth in the cruel, even if commonplace, jests directed at the school teacher's face.

Men's countenances are the speaking books of their characters; and it would be simple defeat of the truth to deny that in the expression which long service has ingrained into the features of many a teacher, the plain reading is spiritual impoverishment. Against this it should be the whole desire and duty of those who cherish the profession to guard: their desire, because the teacher, too, has a right to the fulness of life; their duty, because the worn teacher is like an abused soil, barren and fruitless.

Fortunately the way of salvation is not far to find. It has been pointed by philosopher after philosopher in the course of human history, and its name is the Idea. I mean the kind of Idea that Plato talked about, not a mere present possession of the mind, but a pattern of minds and men and human natures and states to be. Of all earthly things that men create, their own more perfect societies, their Utopias, are surely the finest; and amongst all Utopias those of teachers are first and foremost. This is, and should be, their perpetual source of invigoration and their perpetual and greatest service to mankind. It is theirs (as I have said in other letters) to preserve out of the past its great inheritance of human ideals, the thing we call civilization. But it is also to them, and to them more than to any other class or profession, that is committed the task of framing the future. Teachers are statesmen by their very art, and it should be

their one deep and abiding interest to become wise in statesmanship. This, assuredly, is a fulness of life.

Doubtless I should explain. The matter comes from the very fact of that intimate and changing contact with youth, the teacher's friendships, of which I have already spoken. Youth is the formative period; it is the period of the shaping of generous and disinterested ideals, the period of true public spirit, the period of Castles in Spain which are none the less one day to become models of earthly estates. It is in this period that the teacher's influence is all-powerful, and it is because of this influence that his is perhaps the greatest of all forces in the fashioning of the future—wherefore I speak of him, and truly, as a statesman.

And in one very important particular he is the most qualified of statesmen. We all recognize the fact that wisdom in statecraft is in large part dependent upon knowledge of human history: our American in politics must know history and understand the ideals of his country; the international politicians must comprehend the generations of men gone by and the ideals toward which they strove through the slow toils of the centuries. The historian, by the very nature of his concern, is put in a position of detachment with reference to human affairs, and he acquires therefrom the ability to judge impartially and to select out of the past wisdom for the future. But necessarily he suffers

from one great defect; and that is that he can know the past never directly, as man to man, but only remotely and imaginatively, divided by the screen of the years from the facts which he scrutinizes; so that he can never quite get at their human, living reality. It is only God who can know history directly and truly.

Now the teacher, as it happens, has a source of knowledge nearer in its nature to a divine detachment than has any other mortal. For the generations of students who come and go under his charge are like the generations of men whom the historian surveys. Only, and in this he differs from the historian, the teacher sees these generations of youthful minds face to face, and thought to thought; there is nothing dead or passive in their succession, as is the case with the historic successions of the past; rather, all is living and shaping and life-creating. This it is which gives to the teacher the opportunity of forming an unique type of judgment of human nature and of its possibilities, and this it is which makes his work of such tremendous significance in the ordering of the policies of the future; this, too, which makes it imperative that your teacher who is true to his profession is of necessity an Utopian, in that fair sense in which Utopia is a forecast of the future of mankind.

Most of all, this means that the teacher must be framing and depicting the man, the citizen, of the world that is to be tomorrow. From the acts and

ideas of the eager youth that pass before him in the class-room he must come to know human powers and to select among them the best and noblest; and he must cultivate those better powers; and he must create vivid images of the character which they represent, that the youth may consciously behold them, and beholding may set themselves to their realization. This is a truly prophetic task; it calls for the insight of the seer and the creative power of the man of imagination. It demands patience, patience, for the labor is slow; but its rewards are as precious as can be aught human. For surely it is no small thing to be an architect of the habitations of the future and no small thing to become a portraitist, in the living flesh, of that Man of the Future who is to embody and re-embody all those Utopian dreams which are the essence of human hope and the solace of all human life. Wherefore I say, let us rejoice in the task of the teacher, which is none other than pilotage in the great voyage of spiritual discovery.

# II

# FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY

### I

THE question of foreign-language study is ultimately—as far as the schools are concerned—a college-curriculum question. Were it not for the fact that the grade schools are feeders of the colleges and that the colleges require foreign-language study, there can be no serious doubt that such subjects would drop from the common schools; the Mockett law could never have been passed in Nebraska had there been no German taught in the State University. There is, to be sure, a minor non-college problem presented by parochial schools in which foreign languages are used or taught for the sake of preserving religious solidarities; but even conceding that this problem is of some moment, its present proportions make it, by comparison, insignificant. It is the policy of the colleges with respect to language study that really determines, and doubtless will continue to determine, the complexion of our education. An illustration in point is the recent experience of a university instructor. A high-school principal from one of our smaller towns entered a summer-school course in Anglo-Saxon; before the end of the term he re-

vealed his motive. "Several years ago," he said, we dropped Latin, when the University ceased to require it, and substituted German. Now we are dropping German,—and, don't you think, for the sake of knowledge of English, we ought to put in Anglo-Saxon?" Of course, the man was but one of God's fools misplaced; but his state of mind illustrates the primary responsibility of the college, and shows, too, that his folly was not altogether of his own making. Clearly, the whole question must be handled from the college point of view.

And what, from the college point of view, is the value of the study of foreign language? There are a number of trite answers, most of which, judged by the test of time, have proved unconvincing. The oldest and worst of these is that the study is disciplinary, that no matter how little mastery is attained by the pursuit of language study it has somehow exalted the individual's power of clear thinking. As a matter of fact there is nothing of this kind in foreign-language study comparable in value or effect with the study of mathematics or logic or a rigorous English grammar; while, on the other hand, it is the disciplinary conception that has virtually killed the pursuit of the classical languages for the upgrowing generation. Again, it is urged that the study of foreign languages aids mastery of English; and this is in a measure true, though not economically true. To study either Latin or French (which are the most helpful of foreign

tongues in this respect) for the betterment of one's English is very much like going to Rome in order to arrive at London: the best and surest path to an acquaintance with one's own tongue is a deep familiarity with its native literature.

Again, and more tellingly, there is the practical reason, of acquiring a language for use. We certainly desire scholars and scientists in our nation, if we desire to remain among the civilized. But no scholar or scientist can expect to attain a first place in his subject if he have not a usable acquaintance with Latin, French, and German; and in the not distant future Italian and a number of other modern tongues will be in the same category. This is recognized in our best schools, where knowledge of these languages is requisite to the attainment of the highest degree, that of doctor of philosophy. Next in importance to the scholarly and scientific need is the commercial. Here it commonly extends but to the acquisition of one foreign tongue; and what that shall be is largely predetermined by the intention of the student. Unquestionably, where the intention is not for a definitely foreseen career, French is the most valuable of foreign tongues, being virtually the *lingua franca* of the civilized world. After French, for Americans, Spanish is first in value, not only because of our Spanish-speaking possessions, but because of our necessarily growing intercourse with our southern neighbors. German would fall in a third place in this series, and there

is some probability that Russian may soon pass it in importance. Besides the scholarly and the commercial, a third practical support of language study is the increasing significance of our diplomatic representation. The diplomatic service will never, of course, engage a large proportion of the educated; but it will certainly offer careers of increasing attractiveness to young men gifted for it, and in that gift there must be an aptitude for foreign tongues. Combined, these practical reasons are alone sufficient to ensure the continuance of foreign-language study in our higher schools; they are not, however, sufficient to justify the requirement of language study of any student who knows his own mind in the matter. The real crux of the language question is elsewhere.

It has been phrased by Lord Bryce, in a recent address, perspicaciously. Education is a response to our natural human curiosity, our desire to know. Knowledge is broadly of two kinds,—of men and of nature, of human thought and of the human environment. It is to science that we turn for the latter kind of knowledge; science is our key to nature. It is to the humanities that we turn, and must turn, for our knowledge of men, and for our participation in the whole complexitiy of that subtle hereditament which we name civilization. The humanities, in widest sense, mean knowledge of books; and we might truly say that the laboratory and the library are the material emblems of these

two fundamental branches of the tree of knowledge.

Now knowledge of books is a matter of reading (which needs to be said only because it is so often forgotten); and reading is an art which can be profitably pursued only by those who have acquired the power to select,—just as the laboratory is useful only to those who understand its instruments. Nor is the making of a good reader less arduous than is the making of a good experimentalist; it presupposes not merely a continual training, but also some natural calling. Granted the taste and the industry, there remains but the opening up of the privilege of books,—and this is what the liberal college aims to provide.

The privilege of books, in any meaningful sense, is the privilege of the best books. Many of these (and may the praise of posterity long be to their makers!) are in the English tongue, by right of creation; but many more are in other languages, languages which must be learned—*partially,* as languages are always learned—in order that they may be partially understood. I know, of course, that the English-speaking world is now rich in translations of foreign masterpieces, and many of them superb translations; and I know that a very great treasure may be derived from the study of these works in translation: if any question this, one need but mention King James's Version, and he is answered. But it is also true, as everyone who has ever really caught the spirit of a foreign tongue will

attest, that at the best a translation is but a pale reflection of its original; or if (as at times happens) it better the original, it is essentially another work. It is hard to say this convincingly; but if we accept Lord Bryce's criterion, that the best judge is the man who has first made the acquaintance of a work in translation and has afterwards learned to know it in the original, we shall discover that the testimony to the worth of the effort is virtually unanimous.

Nor should it be necessary to repeat the obvious in saying that we do not make acquaintance with the ideas expressed in a foreign tongue merely for their formal (or, as a scholastic might say it, their intellective) value: the power of a conception comes from the vigor of the context in which it is set, and a main part of that context is inevitably conveyed by the color of its native dialect. Philosophy, because it seeks the universal, should suffer less than other types of literature from this defect; but even in Jowett's splendid English something of his natural glory is faded from Plato.

It is for the sake of literature, and knowledge of literature, that we encourage the study of foreign languages, as an essential part of a humanistic education; nor has the study any other justification besides knowledge of literature which will perpetuate it beyond the bare limits of practical necessity. But it needs no other. Literature—imaginative, political, historical, philosophical—is a thing of such su-

preme importance to civilization that every effort and every premium we can give to the cultivation of its tradition is but small measure of its value; and I mean by this value, not merely its returns to the individual who acquires the knowledge, but its far richer returns to the whole society in which that individual lives. Colleges exist for the training of literate citizens, for the reason that literate citizens are indispensable to the good state.

## II

But, the value of foreign-language study conceded, there remains the question what language or languages are the best selection for him who would be both an educated man and a qualified American citizen. No average mortal can expect to become intimately familiar with more than two or three languages including his own (which requires honest study for its mastery quite as distinctly as do foreign tongues). Here, in the problem of selection, is our real difficulty, for it is here that differences of opinion are real; on the general question of the retention of some foreign-language study the sense of the community is virtually a determined affirmative.

The problem of selection itself may be approached from several different angles, even when the appraisal is to be made purely with reference to literary values (literature in the broad sense which includes historical and speculative as well as aesthetic

writings). There is, first, the educationally practical question of economy of time, or of returns in attainment for effort expended—a question of no small importance when curricula are crowded with subjects as is the case today. There is, second, the question of the intrinsic values of the literatures involved, that is, as to which bodies of human expression in foreign tongues are best worth while. There is, third, the related, but rather more psychological question, of the qualities of languages as forms of expression, and hence as to the particular tone which each can give to the learner's thought and expression. Each of these questions has ramifications, which I shall endeavor to suggest, taking them in order.

The question of what languages are most economical, yielding the surest return for the effort expended, must be considered both from the point of view of the teaching and the learning. It is entirely clear that the profit of pursuing the study of a foreign tongue is in great measure determined by the proficiency with which it is taught. This, in itself, operates as a practical limitation of undergraduate choices. In the University of Nebraska choice for lower classmen is limited to Latin, Greek, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and certain Scandinavian and Slavonic languages. It is quite conceivable that a man might enter the University preferring Hebrew or Chinese—and for very good reasons—to any of these; but the fact that these

languages are not taught would bar him from their profitable study. This aspect becomes one of great importance when we turn from actual college courses to high-school preparation for colleges; for very few of our preparatory schools teach more than two non-English tongues. This matter of preparation is of prime importance to the learner: a language once begun is a language to pursue, be the beginning in the home or the school. The main reason for the undergraduate teaching of Danish, Swedish, and Bohemian is that so many of our youth have a partial acquaintance with these tongues from their parents; and this is also the main reason for the emphasis that has been laid upon German in Nebraska. It is a perfectly good reason, from the point of view of economy of effort, just as, from the same point of view, it is wise to advise a boy who has begun Latin or German in the high school to continue with the same language in college, until he has a usable acquaintance with it.

Apart from such consideration the question of economy resolves into one of difficulty and aptitude. The charge of excessive difficulty is one of the overused arguments against the classical languages. If it be merely a matter of learning to read texts, it is true that French or German is easier to learn to read, for the boy of average aptitude, than is Latin or Greek. But if we add the requirements of conversational acquaintance in the modern tongue, which is usually urged as a large factor in its value, then the

scale of difficulty almost certainly tips in the other direction: it is easier to learn to read either classical language than it is to learn to read and speak fluently either modern tongue,—that is, for the average boy knowing only his mother tongue to start with. Further, it is certainly easier to get effective preparatory teaching in Latin than in modern languages; partly because it is a language read and not spoken and partly because long experience has reduced its teaching to something like pedagogical precision. Again, a small acquaintance with Latin is of more general value than is a small acquaintance with any other language,—I refer to Latin grammar and to certain elementary forms of expression current with English; so that, on the whole, if but a single year could be devoted to language study Latin is by all means the language to recommend. Of modern languages, French, by common experience, is the easiest for the unprepared American to acquire, and judged by the test of economy, it should properly stand next to Latin in the high-school curriculum. It may be repeated here, as said above, that it is also these two languages that are of most service for the betterment of the student's English—which may surely be regarded as an added economy.

On the whole, a judgment of foreign tongues with respect to their literary significance (for the American citizen) fortifies this evaluation. Literatures must be judged for the complete range of their expression, historical and political as well as

æsthetic and philosophical. No sane critic will deny that for æsthetic and philosophical value alone no literature equals the Greek; nor will any sound critic question the fact that Latin owns a similar primacy in the domain of history and politics, while it may be regarded as a strong rival for the second place with respect to artistic and philosophical significance. It is probable that even now there are more books and documents in Latin than in any other language, taking the world over; and Latin possesses the unique value of opening to the student two of the greatest periods of human history—the period of pagan and imperial Rome and the great period of mediæval Christianity. Second to Latin, in all respects, stands French. It succeeded Latin as the language of diplomacy; it became, and still is, the model of polite letters; it contains more books of first importance—many of them, as the works of Leibnitz and Rosseau, written by men who were not born Frenchmen—than any other modern tongue; and its literature embraces a greater range of ideas significant for civilization than does that of any other modern tongue. From the point of view of literary art, French is, with Latin, a rival for the second place after Greek; and as a language of great prose, in spite of the fact that the greatest of prose writers, Plato, was a Greek, French is more important than is Greek.

In this evaluation I have not considered English; I have contemplated only foreign languages. But

in order to appraise the whole group of study languages with which a student may hope to make acquaintance, it is worth while to set English in the measure. If we take as a measure the poetic masters in a language concerning whose position critics are virtually agreed, Greek, again, obtains a triumphant first place, with Homer and the three tragedians in a class for which the only later candidates are Virgil, a Latin, Dante, an Italian, and Shakespeare and Milton, two English poets. In a second class, which should still include "world poets" (if the term be not too vague) the Greeks are numerous; Horace is the most conspicuous Latin, Petrarch, the Italian; France is represented not only by her three classical dramatists, but properly also by the mediæval authors of the romantic cycles; Germany, by Goethe; while England is dubiously represented by Byron,—in a place which, in my opinion, ought to belong to Shelley. From a mere regard of supreme masters—Homer, Dante, Shakespeare—Greek, Italian, and English are pre-eminent. But a language is not school-learned for the sake of a single author, no matter what his mastership; literatures must be taken as wholes. And again, there is some artificiality in comparing the ancient with the modern. In a quite precise sense, the literatures of modern languages are represented by the vernacular books of the last three centuries, and taking these, all in all, French, English, and German (in the order named unless the weight of the two great English poets may put English first) are the literary

as well as the scholarly tongues of the western world. German literature became important at a period (the middle of the eighteenth century) considerably later than either of the others, and it suffers somewhat in comparison from the fact that so much of its significant work is so in a scholarly rather than an æsthetic sense; so that on the whole, it is for the sake of scholarship that its study is of chief importance to the American of today.

There still remains for consideration the third standard of evaluation, with respect to the qualities of languages as instruments of thought and expression. This is a field in which it is easy to become mired in thick dispute; many of the proffered reasons are really but prepossessions. Thus, there is the traditional (since Renaissance times) assumption that there is some special virtue in a complexity of inflectional forms, an assumption proceeding from the fact that the classical tongues are highly inflected. A similar virtue is often urged for German, namely its power of word-formation by a process which is essentially agglutination. As a matter of fact, it may be reasonably argued that both inflection and agglutination are marks of primitiveness and awkwardness in speech. The general trend of Indo-European tongues has been from inflectional to analytical forms of expression, and this is as true of Hindustani and modern Persian as it is of French and English—all of them highly analytic forms of speech. Such a tendency,

setting in with the beginnings of modern civilization and keeping equal pace with the advance of general culture, ought surely to be regarded as a sign of linguistic progress, rather than decadence; and if so regarded, English, as the most analytical of Occidental tongues would be viewed as the most developed, with French a close second. By the same standard, German would be more belated than are the Romance languages, or than are most of the Teutonic dialects.

But the true tests of linguistic perfection are the logical and æsthetic qualities of languages, that is, the range of ideas and the grace of expression of which they are capable. These are qualities exceedingly difficult to identify apart from the fact of their presentation in actual works,—logic is a fact of effective philosophical and scientific writing, grace is the fact of poetic style. If there be any general criterion of the range of ideas of which a language is capable, that criterion must be the size of its vocabulary. Words which are living words are expressions of distinctions, and that tongue which owns the greatest body of words is the one which knows the most distinctions. This we realize the moment we contrast the vocabulary of a civilized tongue with that of a savage speech; the difference in the range of ideas is just what makes the one civilized and the other savage. Judged by this standard alone, English is by far the richest of languages, being as preeminent in the modern world as was Greek in the

ancient. However, it would be dangerous to assume that quantity of speech-material is the sole criterion of effectiveness, or that there are any important conceptions untranslatable from one modern tongue to another; and we know, as a matter of fact, that the agglutinative genius of German, enabling the ready and picturesque formation of words, is a fair compensation for its lesser, as it were, official vocabulary.

The final test of linguistic excellence is grace, the capacity for an elevated style. This is the quality which it is peculiarly the function of genius to develop and make manifest: as Longinus phrases it, sublimity of style is the echo of a noble mind; and it is, therefore, peculiarly indiscerptible from the masterpieces in which it is present. Nevertheless, there are certain indications of a purely linguistic character by which the grace of a tongue may in a way be defined. Euphony is one of these indications, determined by both the sounds that enter into the composition of words and the rhythms of verbal phrase. From the point of view of the singer, the vowel is everything; and if singing-quality alone were to be taken into account, Italian and Norwegian would carry the palm among modern European tongues. But it is a mistake to identify linguistic euphony with musical quality in this artificially musical sense; modern languages are not primarily singing languages, nor are men birds. Swinburne, it is said, could not tolerate the art of music, and

Swinburne is the greatest recent master of English euphony. The qualities that go to make the literary euphony of which he and other great writers are masters are the qualities of articulation and modulation in sound, coupled with range and flexibility of rhythm. Excellence in these characters depends not only upon vowel but also upon consonantal variety, and again upon what I should call the cleanness of the sound elements—that is, upon absence of gutterals and nasals and moderation of sibilants. Greek is certainly the model language in such sonant excellence, and among modern European tongues, I should again rank English first: English has long outgrown the gutterals which still deform German; it is badly weighted with sibilants (its greatest euphonic defect), but they are dominantly less obnoxious than the German combinations of stops and sibilants, which give a mouthy awkwardness to German; while, as compared with French, our sibilants are fairly offsets by their nasalizations. With respect to rhythm, English is again first. Rhythmic freedom is partly dependent upon syllabic accent, but mainly upon syntactical freedom; and in respect to syntactical freedom analytical languages possess great advantages,—and English certainly is the freest of all. French, through its loss of formal accent, loses in range, though it gains in rhythmic subtlety, and is in this sense the fair complement, as it has been the honored teacher, of English. All in all, for sonant articulation and rhythmic flexi-

bility English is the first of modern tongues, at least among the western European. Spanish is, in my judgment, its nearest peer, and German certainly the most backward of the great western languages.

But grace of speech is by no means merely a matter of euphony. The variety of relational forms—pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, verbal auxiliaries, etc.; the number and quality of the idioms; the development of diction levels, from the concrete and homely to the archaic, poetic, and abstract;—all these are crucial factors in the instrumental beauty of languages. English is a backward language in the first respect, its weakness in relational forms being made awkwardly emphatic by its weakness in the range of gender forms and usages; in the other two particulars, the closely connected qualities of idiomatic and dictional variety, it is a very advanced language. It is virtually unique among European tongues in being a double language, both in respect to vocabulary and idiomatic structure; for in English the Teutonic and Romance elements are, as it were, wedded like man and wife, each preserving its individual distinction, while the two are yet one in their mutual co-operation and sympathy. This is an advantage so huge that it outweighs all defects, and makes of English an instrument of the intelligence superior to Greek itself.

English being so composed, the fundamentally important question is from what linguistic sources may it be most beneficially influenced; especially,

has it most to gain from Teutonic or from Romance influences? This question is partly answered by experience and may be further answered by reason. In the past the great assimilations have been of the Romance element by the Teutonic. French and Latin have given English nearly the whole of its polite and lettered discourse; word and idiom alike have been freely assimilated, to such an extent, indeed, that one might almost say that our tongue has been habituated to French forms of speech as our bodies are habituated to French forms of clothing; we take on both with native unconsciousness. German, on the other hand, has offered the most stubborn and awkward materials for adoption. It is difficult to acclimate even a German word in English speech, while all of the efforts that have been made to reproduce Germanic literary modes in our tongue have been experimental and fruitless. Both Spanish and Italian have been vastly more influential upon English speech than has German. Nor is there any reason to anticipate a change in this respect. The Teutonic foundation of English is limited to the homely and very finite range of sensuous affairs, concerned, as a philosopher might say, with the vegetative and passional functions of the soul; the classical and Romance expansion of the tongue has been almost wholly an affair of the intellective soul, descriptive of things of the mind. German itself, in *ante-bellum* days, drew liberally upon these same sources for similar service. But

it is exactly in respect to things of the mind that civilization grows and must continue to grow. We make no rash assumption, therefore, in insisting that it is of the utmost importance, for the health of our mother tongue, that she continue her wholly fruitful intimacy with the classical tongues and their offspring.

The upshot of the whole matter is that viewed from every angle, the foreign languages best worth cultivation, for the sake of literature, are the classical and Romance tongues, and in particular, Latin, French, and Greek. I put them in this order, for this is the order in which I should recommend them to a student asking my advice. If it should be asked what language I would make fourth, I should say German; for while I regard Dante and Cervantes as more significant figures than Goethe, in the whole of European literature, yet the great scholastic and scientific literature of Germany gives to German an unimpeachable preference as compared with Italian and Spanish. Furthermore, the student who has learned French and Latin will acquaint himself with Italian and Spanish with minimum effort.

## III

A phase of the question of foreign-language study to which I wish to advert briefly is its social and political value. In the broad view, higher education is encouraged in states because it is valuable to the

states, and not merely a private advantage to individuals. Language study is a feature of curricula for the same sound reason. It is advantageous to the community to have in its midst men familiar with what has been thought in the historic past and with what is being thought in the living present, the world over. This advantage alone would call for the widest range of language study which we can make effective; and I certainly hope that the near future will see, not only the languages of western Europe, but those of eastern Asia, subjects of college encouragement. A capable Chinese scholar is an ornament to any community, and a thoroughly useful citizen.

But there is still another, and possibly subtler reason, for encouraging the cultivation of variety in foreign-language study. The United States has been called "the Melting Pot," which can only mean that the amalgam from which the future American citizen is to be cast will not be precisely of the color of any of the metals cast into the crucible. We cannot expect this future citizen to be melted down to the hue of the Revolutionary Anglo-Saxon, nor, I think, should we wish it. Rather—if we have that faith in our common humanity which we so vociferously express—we should hope to derive some essential brilliance from each element added to the compound.

Such result will be best attained if we permit and encourage each immigrational wave to bring with it

and to cultivate the best that it has originated in its first home; and that best—we can say it without hesitation—will be found in its noblest literature. Familiarity with the best that has been expressed in every human tongue—that is a social good for which we can well afford to expend time, money, and effort; and it is a good which the United States, as a community, may attain with perhaps less effort than any other great nation, just because our population is an undispersed Babel. Traditions are not made in a day, and traditions which are ideals purified out of centuries of experience are treasures not to be disregarded. Our task should be, by every reasonable means, to encourage the preservation of the best in the ideals of all peoples who come to us; and this can most effectively be done by keeping alive in them the knowledge of the best in their native literatures.

I think, of course, that we should insist that the study of English—language, literature, history—be made primary in every form of the education of the American citizen; and I am in favor of laws prohibiting parochial or other private education in exclusively foreign tongues or without state supervision. But it would be social imbecility not to keep alive and vigorous the pursuit of the broadest possible range of literary studies.

# III

# COMMUNITY PAGEANTRY

## COMMUNITY PAGEANTRY

OPEN-AIR performances, combining music and drama and spectacle, which have come to be known as pageants, are of recent and rapidly growing popularity in the United States. To be sure, for a long time past, springtide dances and masques and processions, with a setting of campus greenery and college halls, have been annual features of college life, especially in the women's colleges such as Vassar and Wellesley and Bryn Mawr. And in recent years, too, the open-air rendering of Greek and Shakespearean drama, familiarized by such troupes as the Ben Greet and Coburn players, has been seized upon by the colloges as at once educational and beautiful; so that now several of our universities possess their outdoor theaters. But the pageant proper, while it has undoubtedly been prepared for and in a way introduced by the colleges, nevertheless has a character and source of its own.

The real source of the pageant and the real cause of its popularity is the nation-wide dawning of our sense of history and national individuality. No doubt the colleges have shown us the way. No doubt, too, the discovery of God's outdoors, of

which the screened porch, the automobile picnic, and the boy scout are so many parallel symptoms, has given an added tug in the direction which the campus spectacle indicated. But under and beyond these lies the fact of an inner discovery, an inner appetite—the discovery that as a people we have an interesting history and that it is one containing incidents that may be made to minister to that hunger for idealization which is the noblest desire of mankind.

Hence it is that all over the country during the past few years the historical and symbolical pageant has appeared to commemorate the past and intimate the future of locality and city and state, creating at once a new poetry and a new patriotism not merely for the youth in college, but for the whole community. The American pageant of today is an expression of the life and the ideals of the people as a whole, each center, in utilizing its own nearer and dearer traditions, contributing its local share to what is fast becoming a deeper and truer national sense than ever we have had before—deeper and truer because more consciously and thoughtfully ideal.

The fact that a pageant is the work of a whole community is perhaps as important as the fact that it is a creative work. To be successfully produced it calls for administrative and executive abilities as well as for musical, literary, dramatic and other artistic powers. It demands the co-operation not merely of the committee members but of many

whose names are not printed on the bills, people who contribute ideas, reminiscences, properties in the shape of old-time garbs, and indeed that atmosphere of interest without which the thing is impossible. Money is required, and accommodating merchants are put to unprofitable pains to secure just the goods needed for this color effect or that appurtenance. By the time the whole work is complete a multitude have had a share in it.

No doubt the size of the community interested somewhat affects the generality of the feeling of participation. Such gigantic affairs as the St. Louis pageant or that given by the city of Newark involve a large financial outlay and a more or less professional character in the preparation. Indeed, the business of the "pageant director" has already sprung into existence, while professional poets are engaged to compose for such occasions. At the other extreme is such a performance as the Fourth of July historical pageant where the only bill turned in to the Bertrand Social Center club, which had the spectacle in charge, was for grease-paint for make-up. The pride of such small places is a notable factor in pageant success, which reciprocally increases the pride. Where the pageant does succeed in the community sense, there is surely a richer reward than any possible financial gain. For the art of pageantry is in every sense a popular art. A pageant that is produced by a community not only presents a pleasing æsthetic spectacle, for

the enjoyment of all, but it educates the native talent of the place, in the use of color and language, in dramatic acting, in beautiful dancing, in musicianship. It makes education in art significant to the people by promising an opportunity for the display and exercise of every natural gift, and by creating confidence in the community's power to entertain itself. It has long been our national custom, from New York City to Quimby's Corners, to receive our theatrical and musical entertainments with a stamp of foreign manufacture and European approval. The American pageant promises not only to develop a native art, but at the same time a native and independent sense of what is good and bad in art.

Calling for so many and such complex talents and appealing not to a private purse but to a public interest, the pageant is not produced simply and easily. It demands a great deal of gratis interest and free work from a great number of persons. A committee must be organized, first of all to insure the finances, which are always precarious and sometimes at the mercy of so uncertain a matter as the weather (for the pageant having few performances runs risks not to be met by entertainments that take the road). Then there must be another committee to supervise the staging—building the scene, training the performers, etc., all requiring abilities of a very special order. The advertising must be looked after, and, as it has become the very appropriate

custom to advertise primarily by means of an artistic poster, an artist able to create this must be found. Artistic taste is called for, also, in inventing the figures of the dances and the stage pictures, of which a special phase is the costuming. Last of mention, though its work falls earliest, is the subcommittee having in charge the book and music; it is their task to work out a controlling idea for the piece and give it a suitable text and accompaniment.

The subject or theme of a pageant is commonly and naturally connected with local history. Hardly a community in the United States, large or small, but possesses plenty of material in the way of past events interesting enough and significant enough to form many such themes. Of course the older communities have the richer and more varied past, and it is quite natural that the first and most enthusiastic pageant givers have been the towns of New England with their (for America) old traditions and those of California with their picturesque histories. But human life is a rich mine of dramatic materials, wherever it is lived, and even the young towns of Nebraska have much in their pasts that only needs to be properly expressed to be found full of meaning and inspiration.

For strictly historical events the most interesting form of presentation is the dramatic. Outdoor drama is more difficult to "carry across" than indoor stage performances, for the reason that the illusion

of the footlights, stagecraft, cannot be so complete, and for the added reason that the audience will be farther from the actors and less able to follow closely their expression. Pageant drama, accordingly must depend as much as possible upon the grouping and action and as little as may be upon the text. On the other hand, it is greatly helped by the familiarity which the audience may be supposed to possess with the theme treated—just the familiarity which in ancient days made Greek drama possible to outdoor audiences of many thousands.

But in addition to the dramatic scenes allegory is used. Even historical materials are occasionally susceptible of allegorical treatment, or invite that exclusively, but usually the allegorical scenes are symbolical in character. The hopes and aspirations of the community can very properly be represented in this fashion—such themes as the mingling of races, the search for human progress, the dependence of man's life upon agriculture, all these and many more may be made beautiful by poetry and music, dance and pantomime. And thus it is that allegory forms the very appropriate beginning and end, interlude, too, if desired, for an historical piece.

Everywhere in the country Indian themes have been employed in the pageants presented. Partly, no doubt, this is due to the picturesqueness of the Indian. Partly it is due to the fact that the history of each community harks back to its Indian days. Partly it is just the expression and badge of

the instinctive Americanism that inspires the pageant movement; the art of the pageant is an art of America and it demands the Indian as a sign of its authenticity.

But there is a deeper and finer reason which is sure sooner or later to come to the surface why the Indian subject is especially appropriate for pageantry. To begin with the Indian is a human being like the white man; strip off his beads and feathers and get into his thought and it will be found that he thinks and feels, not perhaps as does the white man in his workaday apparel, but as does the white man stripped of weights and measures, his business appointments, and his coins. Human nature has a common fund at the bottom, which all men share, and the big part of this common fund is a love of the poetry of that other and greater nature into which man's life is made to fit. Somehow the Indian seems to see this world nature—here in America at least, perhaps because it was so long exclusively his America—in a more clear-eyed fashion than his civilized brother; and so it is that his myths and legends abound with the simple and universal truths that appeal to all men. Coupled with the picturesqueness of the Indian, this quality of poetic truth in his thought and imaginings make of his tribal lore an unfailing fount of poetic allegory.

As I have intimated, the growth of the pageant is a phase of that more universal discovery of outdoor nature, which is soon to redeem Americans

from the epithet, never quite deserved, of "dollar worshipers." The pageant is capable of being made one of the great attractions of the social life of the people, and if it be conceived sincerely and nobly it can easily become a most precious part of that social life. If we love beauty in our surroundings, as all do, why should we not use every available means of making life beautiful? Surely, the pageant is such a means, and it is worth remembering that the sense of beauty grows with cultivation, that just in so far as we create beautiful things we increase our powers of appreciating beauty. The great advantage of a community art is that it educates all while it gratifies all.

The outdoor theater, as everyone knows, is Greek in origin. Not everyone is aware that the Greek theater and drama, and thence our modern theater and opera, grew directly out of a type of performance identical in its elements with the modern American pageant. Greek drama sprung up in a generation from a primitve yearly celebration of the legends of heroic days and allegories of the gods. Like our pageants, these were outdoor performances. There were choruses that sang and danced; there were rhapsodes that recited and actors that acted the deeds of old. A little later great artists like Aeschylus and Sophocles seized upon these materials and produced Greek tragedy. Aeschylus added a second actor to the leader of the primitive chorus, says Aristotle, and he introduced

scene-painting; Sophocles increased the number of actors to three, and made the performance more dramatic and less choric. It was only after these men that permanent stone theaters were built—built because they had created a drama demanding a permanent stage, and a literature which has been the model and inspiration of Europe ever since.

If ever America is to find that native art which has been so long hoped for and so disappointingly delayed, it will come, I believe, through some such source as the pageant. The pageant is democratic, like the spirit of our institutions; it is kept close to the interests and feelings of all citizens, while it represents those interests and feelings which are least selfish and most ideal; it endeavors to symbolize and so make vivid the spirit of our communities as wholes; and in reclaiming the traditions of the past it is gradually bringing, as it were, to the surface of our æsthetic consciousness those historical materials and ideal themes which must one day form the substance of a national art.

# EDUCATION IN TASTE

## IV

## EDUCATION IN TASTE

IN an address delivered at the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Harvard, James Russell Lowell characterized the aim of the college and the ideal of its education:

> Let it be our hope to make a gentleman of every youth who is put under our charge; not a conventional gentleman, but a man of culture, a man of intellectual resource, a man of public spirit, a man of refinement, with that good taste which is the conscience of the mind, and that conscience which is the good taste of the soul.[1]

*Good taste is the conscience of the mind.* Lowell's definition is compact of thought, and is worth dwelling upon. Good taste is a trait we all agree in valuing, though its meaning is as a rule rather vaguely felt; we urge its cultivation and admire its exercise, but the quality itself is generally less analyzed than desired. Such a pithy phrase as Lowell's, then, is a not unwelcome reminder of a duty that we owe to our self-understanding, especially when it is set up as an important factor in

[1]For an interesting discussion of the sources of Lowell's conception see Wm. Guild Howard, "Good Taste and Conscience," *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America,* XXV., 3.

our ideal of educational attainment. What, indeed, is this good taste that we set such store by? And in what degree is its cultivation a proper end of the teacher's task? These are questions which should be considered before we come to the more practical problems of ways and means.

First, then, what is good taste, precisely defined? The term comes into English, I doubt not, from the French *le bon goût,* and so rests upon the Latin *gustus* for its ultimate. The term is, of course, a trope, based upon the physical sensation of a flavor upon the tongue; and at first glance the figure seems not to carry us very far. But metaphors of this sort, especially when deep-seated and long-used, if narrowly examined will usually be found to convey some subtle and exacting truth, and I think the similitude of taste is transferred from the usage of the tongue to that of an ideal sensibility not without its own good reason. To begin with, of the five physical senses that of taste is by far the most unequivocally subjective and idiosyncratic. "I like" and "I dislike," applied to savors, are as near ultimates as any human judgments; there is no court of appeal from the tongue and no law beyond individual preference. Sensations of taste are lawless and unchallengable as are no other sensations (as is well enough shown by the small vocabulary we have to express taste discriminations). Now this same subjectivism, this same idiosyncrasy of right, and repuguance to law, is certainly felt to hold, in some

measure, in the realm of the more ideal discriminations called by the same name of "taste." The maxim *de gustibus non est disputandum* is the perfect expression of this feeling. But would this maxim, think you, carry the same conviction were it framed with reference to vision or hearing, or even to touch or smell, instead of to taste? For we do assuredly dispute much about sights and sounds, touch gives us the primary qualities of physical things, while odors are not even named except with reference to the objects emitting them. Clearly the metaphor of taste conveys a fundamental analogy from the physical to the ideal.

Nor is this analogical freight exhausted by the mere subjective individuality of tastes. The sense of taste is not only the most subjective, it is also the most appetitive of the senses. Of all the senses it is toned by the deepest feelings of desire or antipathy. We hear, see, smell and touch objects that we could not endure to taste, and all in the nature of our daily routine. Language again bears witness to the sense-quality, for when we wish to describe the height of active enjoyment we use the word *gusto,* while the extreme of dislike is *disgust.* Is not this quality of emotional determination equally characteristic of those more enduring tastes which express ideal preferences and give color to personality?

Thus the metaphor of taste carries with it the meaning of individual choice, deeply toned with at-

traction or aversion—a court of appeal at once subjective and passional—which is regarded as in some true sense the core of that other and higher taste which is expressed in our ideal interests. But it would be to ignore the proper function of metaphor to believe that the whole meaning of this higher type of taste is conveyed by the physical analogy. For one thing, the higher taste differs from the sense of taste in being objectively good or bad—for the phrase "good taste" means *objectively* good—and in being, therefore, a subject of judgment, and hence, in some measure, of law. We recognize this implicitly when we speak of "a person of taste," a phrase we should never dream of using with reference to merely gustatory sensations. The higher taste participates in idea as well as in feeling; it belongs to the realm of mind and is therefore, like all true thought, never exclusively individual, but in a degree social.

All this is recognized in Lowell's definition. "Good taste is the conscience of the mind." Like conscience, taste is inward and passional, deeply individual and emotional; but it is also an attribute of "mind," which in Lowell's intention assuredly refers to the realm of ideas and judgments, to those thoughts about things and actions which make up the domain of truth and right. The other half of Lowell's description, "that conscience which is the good taste of the soul," should not escape us here; for, as it were by intonation, it conveys to us this

other fact, that good taste is never far removed from good morals; the two are not identical, but they are inseparable at least in the sense that the best morality is harmonized by taste, which best morality is none other than what the Greeks would have it to be, a harmony of the soul. Think for a moment of the qualities which we associate with good taste: are they not quietness and sincerity and propriety, temperance in all things, and beyond these, fineness of sensibility, purity and truth? and are not these moral qualities?

Good taste, then, is partly a matter of conduct and ideals; it is a part of morality. Again, it is partly a matter of judgment and ideas, of learning and wisdom. In both of these particulars it is subject to education and is a proper care of schools and colleges. But the more elementary factor, represented by the term "taste" itself, is inborn, and it is of the nature of an instinct and an appetite. Judgment, wrote Rivarol, "has never sufficed for the fine arts; these noble children of genius have required a lover rather than a judge, and this lover is the taste, for judgment contents itself with approving or condemning, but the taste enjoys and suffers." Not the educated judgment, but the inspired and fired imagination is the creator of art; and in some degree this inspiration is the endowment of all men. Its nature is that of love, and the object of its love is beauty. Love of beauty gave order to the kingdom of the gods, said Plato, mean-

ing the world of nature; and it is not strange that human nature should respond to the world's beauty with some spark of the natal divinity. The task of the teacher is first to realize what is this love of beauty, to see that it be not turned nor staled by friendlessness. With this beginning, which nature has made generously ours, we may pass on to that development of the perfected taste which comes with the proper cultivation of character and judgment. For more than any other trait which it falls to the teacher to foster, good taste partakes of the whole circle of human endowment.

In the bit of psychology which I have just undertaken my aim has been to indicate the character and place of taste in the inner organization of life. I have pointed out that it is a trait which touches both the intellectual and the moral sides of character, and that it is developed through intellectual and moral training; but that for its development it demands that predisposing love of beauty which is its vital essence and the sanction of its expression. I would now view the same matter from the more objective angle of what we philosophers call theory of values.

Now values, in the broad sense, are appraisements in terms of "good" and "bad." The application of these terms varies in intention with the human interest involved, but man is not so hopelessly complex that his interests are beyond classification. As a matter of fact, the classification is fairly simple.

There are the practical interests of life, whose values are measured by efficiency, that is, by economic adaptation of energy to end; it is in this sense that we speak of a hammer or an apple as a "good" or a "bad" hammer or apple. There are the moral interests of life, whose values are put in terms of virtue and righteousness; the "good man" is the virtuous man. There are the intellectual interests of life, represented especially by science and love of knowledge, and here the valuations are in terms of truth and error; the good argument or solution is the true argument or solution; science knows no value save true and false. Finally, there are the æsthetic interests of life, whose goodness is beauty and whose badness is ugliness; a sonata, a lyric, a landscape is good or bad according as it is beautiful or ugly, and there is no other measure.

It is not unusual to find the moral, intellectual and æsthetic interests grouped together as "ideal" interests in distinction from the material and practical interests of the economic and bionomic world. But if we examine them carefully we find that a truer classification throws the moral and intellectual interests into a middle group, between the practical and the æsthetic. For it is of the nature of the practical interests that they find their end in employment and the production of change, while it is of the nature of æsthetic interests that they find their end in contemplation and the preservation of beauty; employment and contemplation, work and enjoy-

ment, these are the two poles of man's experience, each in its place perfectly typified by the practical and æsthetic interests of life. The moral and the intellectual partake of both poles; for morality is both a means and an end—a means in that it is what makes human co-operation and hence the social efficiency of mankind possible, and an end in that it reacts to create human characters which are objects of contemplation, and beautiful or ugly in themselves. Knowledge, too, which is the end of intellectual interest, is also both means and end, touching at once the practical and the æsthetic; we have applied science and theoretic, the one existing for the practice of life, the other for the mind's contemplation; if we accept the teachings of the pragmatic philosophers (and some of us lean that way), truth itself gets its goodness from its applications to working interests; while, on the other hand, we can hardly differ from Poincaré in his judgment that the internal harmony of the world, which it is the slow labor of science to discover, is the sole and veritable reality and the source of all beauty. Each in its way, the perfected human life and the perfected science are works of art, though the path to perfection is for each the path of daily toil.

If you assent to my analysis you will see that it re-enforces, from the philosophical side, what has been indicated by the psychological analysis of taste. There the love of beauty was made the source of taste; here the experience of beauty is made its end,

and it is an end which gathers into itself the ends of all the other interests of life—the practical, intellectual and moral, for each of them serves its end only in so far as it makes possible the creation and contemplation of beauty.

Volumes might be written in illustration of what I have said, for the whole history and genius of mankind set it forth. Here I must be content with a few hints, drawn from man's long experience. First I would speak of philosophy, which represents man's maturest reflection upon his own condition. No student of its history can fail to be impressed by the constant recurrence of the conception of the contemplation of beauty as the final good and the sufficient reason of all things: Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Bruno, Spinoza, Berkeley, all these bear witness to that truth which Poincaré has so nobly expressed, that the harmony of the world is the sole objective reality and the source of all beauty. To the philosophers I should add the testimony of the philosophic poets, above all Dante and Milton, for whom again reverent contemplation is the essence of beatitude. But it is not necessary to draw evidence alone from men's written expression. What human fact is more poignantly indicative of the values that endure than the price we set upon the potsherds of antiquity? A broken alabaster from Egypt, a shattered urn from Greece—cast in the dump in its own day, treasure-trove in ours. What care is to us that Egypt of old was

the world's granary, that Babylon ruled the world's commerce, Rome its politics, save that these facts made possible for us the carven stone, the modeled tile, the inscribed parchment which bear to us out of the past some record of human idealization, some image of humanly created beauty? There is a steatite vase found in Phæstos in Crete carved in relief with a procession of moving men, all vibrant with life. Originally the vase was covered with gold leaf, stripped from its surface by some barbarian who cast the stone to the refuse heap. To-day not thrice its weight in gold could buy the rejected stone, with its eternal image of human genius. In the alembic of the centuries the real goods of human life are refined out, and they are not found to be the economic and political goods which loom so big to the near attention; rather, they are the idealizations of human genius, dearer than life itself, for they express all that is nobly enduring in life. In every generation there are barbarians, quick to destroy; but the shudder of horror which caught the civilized world with the mutilation of Rheims reveals to us, I trust, the final judgment which time will set upon all men who see only the near advantage, never the world's good.

In what has preceded I have tried to show something of the psychological character of taste and something of its philosophical object. Psychologically, it is a form of valuation, at once intellectual and emotional—a conscience of the mind, as Lowell

phrases it. Philosophically, it is a judgment of value which measures other values, for the reason that of all types of valuation its ends are more purely ends, complete in themselves. If this analysis is correct, it is plain that good taste is essential to the highest sanity and the mark of true cultivation. It is also plain that it is the first duty of the teacher to train the taste, in so far as may be, for the reason that no other form of judgment can be proportionate without a cultivated taste. We must ask, then, how far taste is inborn, a natural endowment, and how far it is subject to development through education.

Certain facts are at once clear. If good taste has the qualities which I mentioned a while back, namely, quietness and sincerity and propriety, temperance, purity and truth, it is evident that a moral training of these traits will also be conducive to the development of taste, while a want of such moral training will hinder the development of taste. Lowell's antithetical phrase, "conscience is the good taste of the soul," is the summary of this truth. Moral training of some sort there always is in human society, yet I cannot but think that in our own day the teaching of morals is on a rather low plane of mind; we seem to fear the stiff structure of its general principles, seeking to shape conduct by easy persuasion rather than by rigor of reason. In so far, the result is mere flabbiness, for it tends to make our morality unconscious rather than controlled and deliberate; and it is ruinous to the taste,

since here the moral quality shows itself in connection with mind, illumined with the light of reason.

Again in the field of the practical life. Educational propagandas nowadays are forever emphasizing the importance of the vocation, the calling. But no aim beyond the vocation is given and no measure of values save the empty enumeration of dollars and cents. Unquestionably the ability and willingness to work effectively are essential to the well-ordered life; therefore to excellence of judgment and soundness of taste. But we shall never in this world become as a people possessors of a cultivated sense of beauty until our youth is taught that work is but a means to an end, that gold unaccompanied by taste is but the advertisement of vulgarity, and that dollars have no good meaning save as symbols of the energy that can be devoted to the beautification of the world. Education is always a cost borne by an elder generation for the sake of the younger, and what the elder generation is willing to pay for, in the way of education, is the fair measure of what it really believes in; all other faiths are lip-service. Judged by this standard dollar-knowledge is the beau ideal of the parents of this generation, to their own spiritual damnation and the grievous hurt of their children.

The perniciousness of the money-standard, which is strictly a purely arithmetical standard, in fields not primarily economic is illustrated in the credit-system, with its numbered grades, hours and courses,

which is made the measure of education in our high schools and colleges. Instead of an ideal of mental attainment, there is set up to our youth an ideal of numerical balances. The manner of securing these becomes of slight importance; branches of learning are measured quantitatively—so many hours of "chem." equal to so many hours of "policon.," etc.; and all standards are blown to the winds. The consequence is that we have the quite absurd spectacle of young people "sliding through courses," as they put it, in naïve unconsciousness of the fact that they are cheating themselves, their parents and the state, when they think that they are cheating their instructors! Obviously, such an educational method is ruinous to sincerity and reason alike, and so is ruinous to the development of all true taste.

But, you will be asking, what of the direct cultivation of the taste? what of instruction in art? Since I am in a querulous mood, pointing hindrances rather than helps, I would indicate a certain defect of this instruction, as we have it to-day, before proceeding to what I regard as its truer form. I do not know that I can better characterize this defect than by naming it a preference for the artificial rather than the artistic. My meaning is that we take our pleasure in artifice, and hence in appearance, rather than in the essence of beauty. Illustrations are numerous enough—any film theater will supply them (though I do not wish you to understand me as condemning the moving picture as a device; good

taste can reform even that). A still more dangerous and subtle form is the prevalence of the notion that knowledge of art is a sort of high-toned gossip. This appears in polite chat, in journalistic reports of artist's doings, in lectures, and worst of all in college and grade school teaching. The impression is conveyed that one is "up on art" when one is able to speak cursorily of this musician's engagements or that one's bad temper, or knowingly in a picture gallery of this as a "Childe Hassam" or that as "a Blashfield." I know of no worse bore in the world than the person who is "up on art," and I know of no more pathetic waste of effort than the process of "getting one's self up" in this accomplishment—excepting only those school courses which teach the youth everything about literature excepting the ideas expressed in it. The truth is that this type of sham learning is born of pure laziness; for like all other things that are worth while, knowledge of beauty comes only as a consequence of hard work. If we prized the thing, we should not begrudge the work; but it is not the knowledge we care for, but only the reputation of knowledge, and so it is that we pursue the short cut that leads only to sham and fatuity.

Am I not already, in describing the defects of our education, intimating the true cultivation of taste? "Familiarity with the best that has been thought and said" is Matthew Arnold's description of the road to culture. Familiarity implies an intimacy that is

beyond verbal expression, an intimacy that is a part of life, as family relations are a part of life, and that is founded on love, as family relations should be founded on love. Familiarity with beauty means that its form and expression are absorbed into character itself, becoming an inward and indiscerptible trait. A truly cultivated taste must be based upon such familiarity—at once a love and a labor of love—with the beauties of the world, of nature and of human nature.

How is it to be attained? Guidance and encouragement are surely all that are necessary. All mankind, I have said, are endowed with the love of beauty; it is as much a part of us as are eyes and ears. If this spontaneous love be met with intelligent sympathy, it will inevitably find its goal; if it be ignored or rebuffed, it will suffer death or perversion. The teacher who would inspire the love of beauty must be possessed of the love of beauty and must be also the familiar of its truest expression. In addition such a teacher must also have a philosophy of life that sets the values of our various activities in their proper perspective, and that is susceptible of clear expression. In a day such as ours, when the best in literature, in music and in pictures is everywhere available, there is small excuse for lack of familiarity with the artistic expression of beauty—and I mean by this, familiarity through the whole mind and soul, intellect and conscience alike.

Further, there is the beauty of nature, God-given

to all men. Each human being is an instrument capable of many and delicate adjustments to the environing universe. No more subtle task falls to the teacher than the seeing that these instruments be brought into proper focus with nature, for the perfect definition of her beauties. The task is not a difficult one if we start with children—always eager of the grand adventure—and its magic is to be found in suggestion, which, springing from a spontaneous insight into beauty, arouses its response as spontaneously as love calls to love.

In conclusion, I would speak once more of the philosophy of life—where, indeed, is the crux of the whole matter. The late Nathaniel Shaler pointed out that in the biological world there are whole evolutions that have no other explanations save the æsthetic. Forms of life arise and develop through eons toward some type of perfection which serves no end except the expression of beauty. The crinoids, the lilies of the sea, are such a form, he says; for millions of years they flourished and developed, and finally died, crowned with perfect beauty. Shaler might also have mentioned the cephalopods, which, starting with the cigar-shaped orthoceratite, far back in the Silurian, culminate in the fairy-like "chambered nautilus," surely the most beautiful of shell-life forms. Indeed, does not every flower or beautiful bird illustrate the same truth—no utility, no mere life-preservation value, is sufficient to account for such loveliness—any

more than utility can account for the loveliness of a sunset. It is nature herself bent upon the creation of beauty, as her own sufficient end.

And is this anywhere more wonderfully shown than in the creation and fostering of the love of beauty in human nature? Nature has created beauty, and she has created us with the love of beauty; this is one of the ultimate facts of the universe; and I, for one, am heartily in sympathy with those philosophers who have found in this fact a reason for reverencing nature and in having faith that her revelation of beauty is of deep and material significance for us. It is nobly expressed by Longinus[2]:

> Nature determined man to be no low or ignoble animal; but introducing us into life and this entire universe as into some vast assemblage, to be spectators, in a sort, of her contests, and most ardent competitors therein, did then implant in our souls an invincible and eternal love of that which is great and, by our own standards, more divine. Therefore it is, that for the speculation and thought which are within the scope of human endeavor not all the universe together is sufficient, our conceptions often pass beyond the bounds which limit it; and if one were to look upon life all round, and see how in all things the extraordinary, the great, the beautiful, stand supreme, he will at once know for what ends we have been born.

In the order of creation beauty is in nature before it is in art. In the order of education love of beauty in art grows with love of beauty in nature. This is no argument for a shallow realism; for the

[2]Prickard's translation.

true color of nature is deep and abiding and of the kinship of truth. But it is an argument for a certain simple and frank reverence for the charm that the seeker will always find about him, in daily things —in flowers and bees and birds, in the turn of a child's cheek or the smile on its mother's lips, in the magic of the summer's green, the austerity of winter's snows, in the heroic deaths of men who love justice and temperance and truth. It is an argument for a value that is at once elemental and supreme in human affairs, which God has placed freely within the hands of all and made difficult only to those who will not seek it. In praise of the love of beauty I have quoted from great philosophers, sages of the historic world; but lest you think that to them only can be given this treasure which is above all treasures, I would quote at the last a prayer of the Navaho[3]—dwellers in hogans, readers of no book save Nature's, but men who have read Nature's book even to her essential truth.

In Tsegihi,
In the house made of dawn,
In the house made of evening twilight,
In the house made of dark cloud,
In the house made of rain and mist and pollen,
Where the dark mist curtains the doorway
The path to which is on the rainbow,
Where the zigzag lightning stands high on top . . .
Oh, male divinity!

[3]Abridged from the version published by Washington Matthews, "Navaho Legends," *Memoirs of the American Folk-Lore Society,* Vol. V. (1897).

With your moccasins of dark cloud, come to us,
With your leggings and shirt and head-dress of dark cloud, come to us,
With your mind enveloped in dark cloud, come to us,
With the dark thunder above you, come to us soaring,
With the shapen cloud at your feet, come to us soaring, . . .
With the far darkness made of the rain and the mist over your head, come to us soaring,
With the zigzag lightning flung out on high over your head,
With the rainbow hanging high over your head, come to us soaring,
With the far darkness made of the dark cloud on the ends of your wings, come to us soaring! . . .
Happily may fair white corn, to the ends of the earth, come with you,
Happily may fair yellow corn, fair blue corn, fair corn of all kinds, goods of all kinds, jewels of all kinds, come with you . . .
Happily the old men will regard you,
Happily the old women will regard you,
The young men and the young women will regard you,
The children will regard you,
The chiefs will regard you,
Happily, as they approach their homes, they will regard you:
May their roads home be on the trail of peace!
In beauty I walk,
With beauty before me I walk,
With beauty behind me I walk,
With beauty above and about me I walk.
It is finished in beauty,
It is finished in beauty!

# V

# EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY

## THREE PAPERS OF THE HOUR

## I

## THE FAILURE OF THE INTELLECTUALS

THE outbreak of the war in 1914 was a triumph for militarism in European civilization: that all men know. But all men do not see with the same eyes what were the forces leading to internationalism over which this militarism triumphed. It triumphed over the frail barriers of European diplomacy and the weak fortifications of international law, symbolized by The Hague—but who expected these to hold against a will to power? It triumphed over the economic bonds of industry and trade, whose symbol is banks and gold—but surely it is a fatuous estimate of the human soul which rests its hope for peace upon its love of gain. It triumphed over the communion of religion, symbolized by ecclesiastical Rome—but when has the Church kept Christians from one another's throats? All these forces were discounted by the wise—slender reeds of support!—but there were still two elements of cohesion upon which men less consciously, but more convincedly, relied for the preservation of the integrity and sanity of the civilization of Europe, and it was the failure of these two that made the bitterest disillusionments of the earlier hours of the war.

The first of these was the spirit of the International Workingmen's Association. Labor has always been the least articulate of the great forces in society; but in recent years it had formulated a faith in the fraternal relationship of the inarticulate masses of all countries vividly enough to impress the world with its reality and strength. It was a prime article of this faith that the masses of the different nations would not (at the command of the classes) slay one another; and even while bourgeois and aristocrat ridiculed, a dim reliance was placed upon this profession. Nay, it is more than probable that a moving cause of the war was the determination of militaristic oligarchs to kill this profession before it should have gained such conscious definition as to rob them of their power; in other words, the pacifism of the International and its socialistic offshoots was an actual cause of the war. The event shows that the militarists were too late, at least in Russia, to save themselves, although they were timely enough so far as ruining the world was concerned. Possibly the spirit of the International may yet assert itself redemptively—if first it gain articulation and discover within itself something of that generosity and nobility without which no faith can redeem.

But if the spirit of the International was the least articulate, that of the intellectuals was the most articulate of the great professions of European culture. It is the very business of art and science and

scholarship to express themselves, and to an international audience and for an international understanding; and there was no solidarity of Western civilization so pretentious as that of its intellectualism. When the leaders (for the intellectuals proclaimed themselves leaders) of all the great nations were masters and pupils to one another, how could there be—so it was imagined—a disruption of so bonded a unity? So seated was the delusion that months after the war had bloodily blotted out all other interchanges, doctors and publicists were still sending manifestoes across frontiers, passing from justification to repudiation and finally recrimination and hatred, in the wordy battles that seemed suddenly so remote from men's affairs. One of the very earliest of these manifestoes was the utterance of the ninety-three German professors sent out to neutrals; and it was also the most damning of all to the pretensions of intellectualism.

For from the very first it was abundantly evident that the intellectuals—naturalists and historians and all—were merely the propagandists of a narrow nationalism. The high communion of art and scholarship and the admirable edifice of science which were the creations of the concerted devotion of many lives in many lands, and which were supposed and indeed felt by their devotees to be the symbols of a spiritual unity and fellowship, suddenly, under the strain of the partisan ambitions of a class whom the intellectuals thought themselves

to hold in contempt, fell vacantly asunder—and in a moment the mind of Europe was shown to be hollow and void of all spiritual substance.

In the hour of strenuous physical conflict the full significance of this collapse cannot be realized; but in the long run it will assuredly be found to be the most vital blow which the war has inflicted upon the modernism of the Western world. There was nothing so distinctive of this modernism as the achievement of its intellectuals; this was our pet and pride, the show baby of our civilization. We had come, too, to regard it as our salvation and as embodying the whole grace and illumination of life. To see a thing so idealized distorted to grotesque abuse, and what had been proclaimed the saviour of humanity made the slave of man's corruption, this can end only in shock and revulsion and the gall of a bitter denial. It is therefore of high moment—lest we not utterly destroy in too greatly condemning—that we see the intellectualistic idol in its unfurbished truth, that we may discover its defects in season.

For there is a desirable salvage. I never read the "Meditations" of René Descartes—who is with an especial right the master of the moderns—without a renewed reverence not only for a man of such simple and conscientious honesty, but also for the truth itself. And I find in his immediate successors, in Spinoza the Jew, Locke the Englishman, Leibnitz the German, the continuation of that same

austere and inspiring truthfulness. But if—not led by the gradations of illusion to which surrender is so easy when one follows step by step—if a leap be made from the beginnings to the nineteenth century, how unspeakable is the descent! Philosophy becomes confused with its own cunning and deluded with its own shows, and at the end we have such embodied bombast as Herbert Spencer and such theatric lying as Ernst Haeckel dominating economics and politics and religion with their biological spells and materialistic incantations. Love of truth is lipped and praise of the spirit mouthed, but everywhere reason is made the apologist of prejudice and science the pander of appetite.

Consider for a moment the dogmas and tenets of the intellectuals. Foremost is naturalism, everywhere, in art and science and religion, fuming about realities and meaning sensation, and undertaking such monstrosities as the creation of a rational faith—an artificial religion! With this, and undoubtedly as a conceit growing out of the invention of machines, is the conviction of human self-sufficiency: the dignity of man, the rights of man, the prowess of man, the idolatry of man—and of woman. The two, compounded under the blessed name "evolution," unite into a fatuous dogma of progress, which is really only the fatalistic optimism of the irresponsible—like the chirping of crickets in Indian summer. That the Paradise of such a confession should be the materialistic bliss of fat

meals and gaudy apparel, and that its ethics should resolve first into a consolation of vanity and thence into the cynical acceptance of the right of might is the sure effect of the drugging—as inevitable as the winter which ends the insect chorus.

The truth is, modernism suffers from a horrible vivisection of the soul, and its pæans to the intellect have been but praise of its own deformity. A soul which consists of mere intellect, with faith and hope and charity sheared away, is as helpless as a pigeon without its cerebellum; all steersmanship is gone, and its ideas are but empty ghosts twittering in a vacuum, ready to rush in a huddle at the first sacrifice offered, there to lap up the red blood. When in the modern world material enterprise set up the altars and, with capital jangling the castanets, politics prepared the offering, all the ghosts of science, art, and theology flew to the rites—seeking an interest, seeking a purpose, seeking a confession which might give them life and substance. The church talked social service and became a promoter of social clubs; art talked devotion to beauty and became a purveyor to mean appetites; science posed as the physician of human nature and concocted smooth formularies justifying the iniquities of the strong. The upper classes everywhere sank back into a kind of mawkish paganism, of which the most disheartening symbol is modern "higher education," huckstering off to capital the various brands of brains which it models to capital's use, and pointing with

a vapid piety to the pillared porticos which capital rears for it—as if, by restoring the sacred precincts, Olympian Zeus could be made to live again.

It is small wonder that in this showy ritual labor has deemed itself to be the sacrifice—"the goat," as we say. And it is small wonder—though thrice a pity—that, inarticulate and unled, it has made itself greedy of the unnatural feasts of politics and capital. This was the ruin of the spirit of the International—greed of economic goods; in our own country it is the "interest" of labor; in Russia it is maximalism and the sottishness of self-lust. For the spectre which the Bolsheviki have raised is the proper Nemesis of our hypertrophied intellectualism: it is unreason and appetite incarnate answering reason and intellect discarnate. The man of the body politic has been deformed in all his organs and functions and his whole being is in revolt.

The war is a dreadful purge, applied to a sufferer in a desperate strait. We trust that it will carry away many ill humors from the constitution of mankind, but we know that at the best there must be a long period of anxious care before we can hope to see civilization restored and hale. In the broadest sense the problem of recovery is an educational one. A new ideal of human life will have to be discovered by those who see truest the meaning of the spiritual agony. A new schooling will have to be developed to enkindle in a fresh generation the light of this ideal. What is beyond lies on the knees of

the gods. But of this much, at least, we may be sure: that the future will refuse to own any mere intellectualism, but will demand in its place (and we need not shun the word) a confessed spiritualism. The education of the future, in school and state, will instill with all its power that there can be no knowledge without responsibility, no realization of beauty without sympathy, no discovery of goodness without idealism. There must be faith of men, not in other men for their attainment's sake, but in the visioned Man, for his unattainment's sake.

## II

## THE BALLOT

THE ballot is the charter of democracy and the certificate of freedom of the democratic citizen. The voter, in the act of voting, proclaims that he is a civic man, with rights and responsibilities, a legislator, having a voice in the making of the laws by which he is governed. No matter how remote from the conduct of affairs his ordinary walk may be, for the moment he has entered into the halls of state, there to enact for the public destinies. The afflatus of the booth, I might call this high emotion,—but I would not speak mockingly of it, for it is just this emotion (*in posse* or *in actu*) which gives to the franchise its power to make men of citizens.

There is, to be sure, much that is farcical in the actual business of voting. I recall well enough my first presidential ballot. A man with bulging eyes and a coarse mustache challenged my vote in a loud mechanical voice. I had never seen the man before, and I became red and angry, for I felt that if he had been a gentleman he would have communicated his intentions to me beforehand, seeing that I was duly registered. However, he turned away

with a languid and remote indifference as I swore in my vote. Presently, a sharp-eyed chap from another angle challenged another voter, who turned out, from his confused answers, to be a butcher residing in a neighboring state—temporarily, he said. I noticed my challenger bristle up and insist on the butcher's voting, for he seemed to be in two minds about the matter. The fact is, it was a close ward, but the man with the bulging eyes and coarse mustache won out.

That was in the days when voting was easy: an eagle or a rooster surmounting a circle for the voter's cross made the straight ballot plain for all and inevitable for the ignorant, and vastly simplified the party machinery. Since that day I have voted a variety of ballots safeguarded from the ignorant and hopelessly puzzling to the intelligent. Indeed, I have often shivered at the mere thought of the wasted paper as the great blanket sheets were handed out to me. Then to the booth, and I try to catch in my mind some vague clue that will identify for good or ill a few in so great a sea of names. There are various principles of selection open to the voter, after the first few known and deliberate choices have been recorded. There are cards with portraits of the candidates which have been handed you as you entered, and with which the booth is littered; and one can judge something from physiognomy. There is the bruit of a name: you have heard a man roundly abused, and you are sure there

must be something in him, good or ill (and candidates assure me that an ill fame is better than none). Indeed, there is the form of the name itself, frequently indicative. I once lived in a town ruled by alien-born citizens, and I made it a principle, after voting such names as appeared to be of American origin, to vote the Irish if the French happened to be the majority of the hour and the French if the Irish were in. Of course it was futile; and in my later life I have adopted the simple rule of voting only for those candidates about whom I happen to have acquired some knowledge.

A few of my acquaintances ("highbrows" mostly) never vote; or, if they do, they are ashamed to acknowledge it. It is not difficult to read their minds —about what must have been in the minds of the white representatives in a freedmen legislature of the Carolina reconstruction. "Law-makers," they say to themselves, "judges of the public policy, sovereign discoverers of the good!" . . . and they lift their eyebrows and shrug helplessly. It is an intelligible attitude, and it is without vanity; indeed, it is reasonable if one believe that there are better and worse citizens, and that those are better who are best tutored in the broad affairs of men. But it is an attitude that gets all that makes it reasonable from the fantastical forms which the ballot assumes; not from what the ballot should be, or is in principle.

For it is the ballot—let me repeat—that is to the

citizen the certificate of his rights and the token of his responsibilities as a civic man; and these are things too precious to mankind ever to be allowed to suffer diminution. Rather, they should be enlarged and intensified and broadened in the consciousness of every citizen, male and female; for rights and responsibilities are the friends of the state and the true wardens of freedom. But this is not to say that our democracy has perfected the use of the ballot; or, indeed, that the public has yet attained to a clear-eyed perception of the kind of choices it can effectively determine.

The principle of the sound ballot is implicitly present in the attitude of my "highbrow" friends. They justly feel that in a society having such complex needs as our own and provided with such delicate economic and moral instruments for the satisfaction of those needs public policies should be determined and public works administered by the most highly trained and scientific intelligence society possesses. They feel that the statesman should be a man schooled in the history of statesmanship and conversant with the possibilities of human nature; that the directors of commerce should be economists, the controllers of industrial enterprise should be engineers, the officers of sanitation physicians, and that everywhere in society the spirit of science should govern the execution of public affairs. If modern intellectualism be not utterly an illusion, if it have any value for mankind, the definition and

satisfaction of the public will—in our age-long search after the good—must surely be its mission.

Obviously such matters should not be left to the hazard of the polls. They are tasks of the intellect, and of intellect very highly trained, and they should be left to the judgment of trained intelligences. The "highbrow," if he be an engineer or a physician or a lawyer and competent in his profession, is as a matter of fact a more capable judge and deserving of a more telling voice in all matters where mechanics or medicine or law may be made ministers of the public good. Party cries and platforms and campaign arguments are but dreary fustian to men who understand both their own powers and their own limitations, as most scientifically trained men do. It is only to the untrained commoner that they appeal, for the untrained man deems himself to be a judge in all things—and most a judge in public affairs. Clearly he is not so, and clearly he ought not to wield a ballot that makes him appear so, either to himself or to others.

What then is the true function of the ballot, and the principle of a valid suffrage? Put yourself in the polling booth and ask after the principle governing the choices of which you are least ashamed and I think the answer will be before you. For it is in your choice of *men,* men of whom through some contact of personality or idea you know the character, that you have best served the state. Your knowledge of policies, your sense of interest, have

influenced your choice to an extent, but fundamentally your choice is based upon the feeling that here is a man who may be trusted to preserve the integrity of the state because of his own integrity. Your ballot is a judgment of the candidate's character; and this is exactly what it should be, for this is the one thing that you are qualified, as a voter, to pass upon.

It is, in fact, the qualification that justifies universal suffrage. Human nature is complex and many-faceted. You and your fellow citizens are showing yourselves to one another constantly, and in a multitude of lights and to multitudes of persons. Not any one of them is a perfect judge of you, nor you of any one of them. But if a man be put up for public judgment, as a candidate is, then his true valuation is pretty certain to be expressed, —not, heaven knows, by the vote he may receive *per accidens,* but by the group of ballots cast by those who know him in some personal fashion. It may have been but a glimpse of his face, a gesture (I could never vote for the man with the bulging eyes and coarse mustache) it may have been a trifling transaction; it may have been but a public utterance or a portrait; but we human beings are always and instinctively reading men's characters in their faces and in their demeanors as well as in their deeds; it is the one school in which we are all trained; and the determination of character through a many-voiced judgment, expressing a multitude of

impressions, is the true justification of a wide suffrage. A candidate who is judged not only by his business partners and club associates, by his fellow church members and his underling clerks, but also by his physician, by the Greek who shines his shoes, by the driver who meets his car on the road, indeed, by his wife, and the ladies he encounters at receptions,—such a candidate will be well judged; and he is likely to represent truly the ideal of probity which his community owns.

The fact is that even with our present bunglesome ballot most choices are made on this basis,—from the presidency down. It is the fact of personality that determines political manoeuvering,—plastering our walls with portraits, giving car-end orations, and cinemas of the great man's gestures to audiences that care not a whit for his words. If mere reason were to be our judge of fitness all candidates would be men of the closet, preparing their briefs for the public press that they might be meditated at leisure. But oratory is, and ever will be, the strongest force which a candidate can bring to large groups of voters, not primarily because of the orator's skill, but because the forms of his expression are revelations of his character. Party platforms —why, the very word "platform" proclaims them to be (what political cynics love to point) but devices for making the rostrum effective,—give the candidate themes upon which to try his skill and show his zeal; but everybody knows that his actions,

as an officer, will be determined by the public exigency, not by the plausibility of pre-election forensic.

But if such is the valid principle of suffrage, and if the proper exercise of the ballot is the choice of representative men, how is its proper working to be attained?—for our present methods miss the point woefully. To my mind there is a simple program leading toward this desirable end. The number of elections ought not to be diminished; the number of voters ought to be extended—at least, to include the women. But the number of elective offices should certainly be diminished, so that no officer should be chosen by ballot for a post calling for technical qualification or one in any sense narrowly administrative; such offices should be filled by appointment or through commissioners qualified to elect. Further the terms of office, for commissioners and administrators and perhaps for legislators, should be greatly extended; for rapid rotation of officers is only a confession of political helplessness. Through such devices the short ballot could be secured—ballots so short that at each election every citizen would have a full opportunity to acquire some direct knowledge of *all* the candidates; and thus insure genuine electoral judgments. Of course, mistakes would be made—the politician hath an art that may deceive even the many; but for this the recall is the proper remedy. The recall is justified by the same arguments that justify the ballot,

and it fortifies the strength and meaning of the ballot. Initiative and referendum, it may be remarked, which are so often hitched up with the recall, are condemned by this same argument: they stand for public choice where the public is not qualified, in the field of ideas and executive politics, not in the choice of the good man.

Of course, there is one policy which the public must decide, and to the right decision of which all democratic training should be directed. This is the ideal of the good life, in society. The administrators of public affairs should be the intellectuals —the experts, who best know how to secure results. But the legislators, in a final sense, must always be men who are judges of the social good, and that means men who are themselves good,—for "the good man is the measure of everything," as Aristotle wisely said. But how else, save through electoral selection, is the good man to be found? Indeed, one may truly say that the whole art of democratic government is the pragmatic definition of the good through the choice of representative men. None of these men—not a Washington, not a Lincoln,—will be perfect, or be the embodiment of the perfect citizen; but the perfect citizen will gradually be defined to all citizens—as the ideal American is now partially defined by Washington and Lincoln —through this process of selection. And to what other end does a state exist?

## III

## PRO FIDE

A MAN'S political education should never be completed. It was more than mere antique sentiment, it was the wisdom of the truest sage, that led Solon, when he described to Crœsus the happiest of men, to make his hero—after he had lived a virtuous life, reared a family, and enjoyed an honorable share of what men call goods—end his career and fulfill his happiness by death in battle for his country. Perfect citizenship is a thing not easily to be attained; while a man lives he must fight for it (most of all with his own anarchic soul), and death must overtake him fighting for it; and not until he has fallen can his fortune be accounted and the final credit set to his estate.

In a certain broad and true sense the bestowal of the ballot is a recognition of this fact. The ballot is very properly called a weapon and an election a battle; in the possession of the ballot there is a defensive safety, and in the exercise of the vote a military responsibility demanding an alert mind and an eye unwaveringly set on the good of the state. The ballot is not a security that can be put in a safety deposit and draw comfortable interest; its

employment is its preservation. This means that he to whom it is committed must be relentlessly in training, learning through use the better mastery of his citizen's rights and, like a surgeon or a soldier or a man of law, improving his skill with practice—which can only signify practice of civic judgment in that study of human nature and choice of good men which is the true life of a democracy. Such a process is necessarily educational, and it is the great virtue of democracy that it recognizes no finished men—your perfect valet, for example, or hussar, or beau—and no classes save citizens, active or preparing; and both of these are in process of education.

Of course, there is a distinction between the boy at school and the man at the booth. The latter is doing what the former is preparing for, even though we own that the preparation must continue with the practice. And certainly it makes a huge difference in the voter if the boy has been properly trained. For there are principles which underlie the education of democrats in their school days, just as there are principles governing the school training of those who are to become docile subjects of an autocracy. Next to the goose-step (which is but its automatic display), the docility of the German, schoolboy and subject, has come in for our most copious contempt; but as a matter of fact, this docility is merely law-abidingness, which among ourselves we surely regard as a virtue; and if we were to analyze our an-

tipathy, it would be found to lie not against a spirit of obedience to law, but against a spirit willing to accept laws which it has had no part in making; in brief, we are angry with the Germans because they are not democrats. Obviously (and this is what we hold against the German schoolboy), it has been the design of German education to train anti-democratic citizens—primarily, I suspect, by impressing upon the youth that admiration for loyalty, that hero-worship and fidelity to the kingly, which appeals so warmly to the youthful temperament. Their success in this design irks us, and the more because we have so widely and uncritically copied German educational methods and ideals when we should have been creating a schooling appropriate for a democracy.

The key to democratic education, like the key to democratic institutions, is liberalism. Along with the freeman's ballot, the free public school is the great fortress of democracy. But the school must be not merely free of access, it must be free in spirit; that is, it must stand for a liberal education. This means, first of all, that it must avoid early specialization. In Germany there is one type of public school for the child of peasant or laborer; there are other types for merchants, soldiers, legislators: the whole system is based upon the hypothesis that the state must be a class-state, each man born to his appropriate moves and from infancy assigned to his possible squares, like the pawns and

pieces of the chess-board. America has escaped this, luckily, for its primary schools; but overhead we have been assiduously copying the Germans, and the superstructure is weighing more and more heavily upon the common-school foundations, tending constantly to contract their native liberalism. Undoubtedly, for that kind of efficiency which sees all ends from the beginning, the German method is best; but no free state can afford to foresee its destinies—except the one destiny of holding open the possibility of choice.

Liberalism means, then, primarily the training of youth to choose their own careers; which, in turn, should mean a belated entrance upon a career. For it is not to be supposed that this choice is to be made intelligent by an early smattering in many subjects and arts; such a notion springs from the fallacious confusion of means with ends, and it is only knowledge of ends that can make choice intelligent. Such knowledge cannot be acquired from anything short of a comprehension of the history and organization of society in connection with a fair internal estimate of the nature and possibilities of man. That is, it is knowledge that is possible only with a certain maturity—as much, at least, as is required of the voter; and it should be the aim of a democracy, in the interests of its own perfection, to keep its youth in the tutelage of liberal studies up to their majorities. The expense of such a schooling would of course be great; but its returns (granting wisdom in

the process) would be inestimable. Further, if we look upon the schools, as we should look upon them, not as eleemosynary burdens, but as part of the returns which society gives its citizens, we should find in the richness of their life our reward. In no institution is the faith of a people so honestly shown as in its schools; what a generation of men is willing to teach to its children is the fairest measure of what it really believes in; and if democracy is a part of our vital faith, then by every means at our disposal our children will be trained for its preservation, which can only be through their comprehension of it.

The creation of such a comprehension should be the guiding principle of our public-school organization. Not variety of skilled technicians, but humanistic breadth of mind, is the true token of the liberal state. The two things are not incompatible, but they do not necessarily coexist, and it is easy to sacrifice the second to the cheaper production of the first (as Germany shows, and as we, alas! are in peril of showing). We must face the fact that democracy is dearly bought and dearly maintained, and that its liberalism is a kind of delicate oscillation of the soul which can be preserved from fatal overthrow only by an eternal gymnastic, for which no training is too precious.

If we ask what should be the form of this training, how our schools can be made liberators of the spirit, fosterers of democratic citizenship, we need

not go, for our programme, beyond what is already stated. For we have said that the youth of the land are to be educated to become choosers of their own careers, and this means choosers of the whole life that they are to live, private and public: they are to be taught statesmanship in that final sense in which the statesman is the discoverer of the good of which human nature is capable. Each generation of men must make of its heirs a generation of discoverers of the good (not easeful spendthrifts of their fathers' fortunes) : so only may men remain noble.

As sought concretely, this object is not beyond attainment. Man is by nature limited. He is an animal with simple appetites and few senses, whose satisfactions are the chore of our technical skills—engineerings, medicinings, purveyings. He is also a spirit, limited in his spiritual nature: for there are just three forms of the good, in a final sense, of which he has inner apprehension, and these are the goodness, truth, the goodness of beauty, and the goodness of virtue or nobility of character. Educators should be thinking of these forms of the good, to which studies are the means, when they seek to liberate the soul of youth; and in the light thereof, surely they could simplify their scholastic machinery. For we are constantly losing the end of education in our absorption with its means, forgetting that all that is harmonious and beautiful in human progress (art and science and statecraft

alike) comes from the supple and simple adaptation of means to ends conceded to be good—from the law of parsimony, which is the key to all honest discipline. Or, briefly, what can compare with mathematics as giving inevitably a perception of truth and error? What betters our imaginations of beauty more than beautiful poetry or noble prose? What criticism of the virtues of one's own soul is more capable than is admiration for the ideal man as the history of human deeds and of men's utmost desires has portrayed him? The means to all these are as free as the art of printing—plus the little sacrifice of time which we should give for our democracy's sake.

So giving, with a rounded understanding of the meaning of liberalism, we may escape falling into the fallacy of the past three centuries of European civilization, which have cultivated the technical intelligence of man at the cost of the liberal and spiritual, and have brought us to the dread pass of today. Rather, thinking of truth and beauty and nobility, we should be ever portraying—since these are the essence of our humanity—the form and features of the ideal citizen, the hero and king of a democratic society.

For the Germans are not wrong in holding before the eyes of their youth the image of a heroic German and bidding them be loyal to him. All great nations have been built up in character and soul by the images of heroes—such a one as Achilles or

Roland or Arthur or Siegfried. Our distaste for German schooling should not be that it makes idols of its heroes, but that it confuses unheroic princelings with the heroic—the Crown Prince medalled as Siegfried is an example. Democracy, too, must have its hero—perhaps a composite of its noblest, as we Americans make a kind of composite ideal of Washington and Lincoln. All liberal education should be directed to the delineation of such a national hero, whose portrait, in the nature of things, could never be completed; it would grow in stateliness with each new achievement of the humane spirit and with each renewed participation in its character. Liberal culture, indeed, can only mean that this character of the ideal citizen is in some degree manifested in all citizens; and the true meaning of equality in society is but the common possibility of men to share in such salvation.

If we would seek example, we need only turn to the greatest of all democratic movements in human history. For the living heart of Christianity is that simple faith in the redeemableness of the common man which Jesus made the prime article of its faith. In a direct and unavoidable sense the soul of all that is Christian in Christendom is the *Imago Christi.* Through this image an ecclesia of the spirit has been created which, with all defects, is still the noblest of human gains. It is an image of faith, faith in an ideal character gifted with perception of the ideal good; and upon faith of no

other type can any true democracy grow or be made secure. For in a political as in the ecclesiastical democracy the fight is never ended while life lasts, and only unto the departed can the final credit be set to their estate.